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SELECTIONS



FROM THE

EDINBURGH REVIEW;

COMPRISING

THE BEST ARTICLES IN THAT JOURNAL,
FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME.

WITH

A PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION,
AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

EDITED BY MAURICE CROSS,

SECRETARY TO THE BELFAST HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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PART FIRST.

CHARACTERS OF EMINENT DIVINES — PHILOSOPHERS — STATES-
MEN — ORATORS — HISTORIANS — NOVELISTS — CRITICS.

WARBURTON.*

WARBURTON, we think, was the last of our *great* divines — the last, perhaps, of any profession — who united profound learning with great powers of understanding, and, along with vast and varied stores of acquired knowledge, possessed energy of mind enough to wield them with ease and activity. The days of the Cudworths and Barrows — the Hookers and Taylors, are gone by. Among the other divisions of intellectual labour to which the progress of society has given birth, the business of reasoning, and the business of collecting knowledge, have been, in a great measure, put into separate hands. Our scholars are now little else than pedants, and antiquaries, and grammarians, — who have never exercised any faculty but memory; and our reasoners are, for the most part, but slenderly provided with learning; or, at any rate, make but a slender use of it in their reasoning. Of the two, the reasoners are by far the best off; and, upon many subjects, have really profited by the separation. Argument from authority is, in general, the weakest and the most tedious of all arguments; and learning, we are inclined to believe, has more frequently played the part of a bully than of a fair auxiliary; and been oftener used to frighten people than to convince them, — to dazzle and overawe, rather than to guide and enlighten. A modern writer would not, if he could, reason as Barrow and Cudworth often reason; and every reader, even of Warburton, must have felt that his learning often encumbers rather than assists his progress, and, like shining armour, adds more to his terrors than to his strength. The true theory of this separation may be, therefore, that scholars who are capable of reasoning, have ceased to make a parade of their scholarship; while those who have nothing else, must continue to set it forward — just as gentlemen now-a-days keep their gold in their pockets, instead of wearing it on their clothes — while the fashion of laced suits still prevails among their domestics. There are individuals, however, who think that a man of rank looks most dignified in cut velvet and embroidery; and that one who is not a gentleman can now counterfeit that appearance a little too easily. We do not presume to settle so weighty a dispute; — we only take the liberty of observing, that Warburton lived to see the fashion go out; and was almost the last native gentleman who appeared in a full trimmed coat.

He was not only the last of our reasoning scholars, but the last also, we think, of our powerful polemics. This breed too, we take it, is

* Warburton's Letters. — Vol. xiii. page 343. January 1. 1809.

extinct;—and we are not sorry for it. Those men cannot be much regretted, who, instead of applying their great and active faculties in making their fellows better or wiser, or in promoting mutual kindness and cordiality among all the virtuous and enlightened, wasted their days in wrangling upon idle theories, and in applying, to the speculative errors of their equals in talents and in virtue, those terms of angry reprobation which should be reserved for vice and malignity. In neither of these characters, therefore, can we seriously lament that Warburton is not likely to have any successor.

The truth is, that this extraordinary person was a Giant in literature—with many of the vices of the Gigantic character. Strong as he was, his excessive pride and overweening vanity, were perpetually engaging him in enterprises which he could not accomplish; while such was his intolerable arrogance towards his opponents, and his insolence towards those whom he reckoned as his inferiors, that he made himself very generally and deservedly odious, and ended by doing considerable injury to the cause which he intended to support. The novelty and the boldness of his manner—the resentment of his antagonists—and the consternation of his friends, insured him a considerable share of public attention at the beginning; but such was the repulsion of his moral qualities as a writer, and the fundamental unsoundness of most of his speculations, that he no sooner ceased to write, than he ceased to be read or inquired after,—and lived to see those erudite volumes fairly laid on the shelf, which he fondly expected to carry down a growing fame to posterity.

The history of Warburton, indeed, is uncommonly curious, and his fate instructive. He was bred an attorney at Newark; and probably derived, from his early practice in that capacity, that love of controversy, and that habit of scurrility, for which he was afterwards distinguished. His first literary associates were some of the heroes of the *Dunciad*; and his first literary adventure the publication of some poems, which well entitled him to a place among those worthies. He helped ‘pilfering Tibbalds’ to some notes upon Shakespeare, and spoke contemptuously of Mr. Pope’s talents, and severely of his morals, in his letters to Concannon. He then hired his pen to prepare a volume on the Jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery; and having now entered the church, made a more successful endeavour to magnify his profession, and to attract notice to himself, by the publication of his once famous book on ‘the Alliance between Church and State,’ in which all the presumption and ambition of his nature was first made manifest.

By this time he seems to have passed over from the party of the Dunces to that of Pope; and proclaimed his conversion pretty abruptly, by writing an elaborate defence of the *Essay on Man*, from some imputations which had been thrown on its theology and morality. Pope received the services of this voluntary champion with great gratitude; and Warburton having now discovered that he was not only a great poet, but a very honest man, continued to cultivate his friendship with great assiduity, and with very notable success; for Pope introduced him to Mr. Murray, who made him preacher at Lincoln’s Inn, and to Mr. Allen of Prior-Park, who gave him his niece in marriage,—obtained a bishopric for him,—and left him his whole estate. In the mean time, he published his ‘*Divine Legation of Moses*,’—the most learned, most arrogant, and most absurd work,

which has been produced in England for a century ;—and his editions of Pope, and of Shakespeare, in which he was scarcely less outrageous and fantastical. He replied to some of his answerers in a style full of insolence and brutal scurrility ; and not only poured out the most tremendous abuse on the infidelities of Bolingbroke and Hume, but found occasion to quarrel with Drs. Middleton, Lowth, Jortin, Leland, and indeed almost every name distinguished for piety and learning in England. At the same time, he indited the most high-flown adulation to Lord Chesterfield, and contrived to keep himself in the good graces of Lord Mansfield and Lord Hardwicke ;—while, in the midst of affluence and honours, he was continually exclaiming against the barbarity of the age in rewarding genius so frugally, and in not calling in the aid of the civil magistrate to put down fanaticism and infidelity. The public, however, at last, grew weary of these blustering novelties. The bishop, as old age stole upon him, began to doze in his mitre ; and though Dr. Richard Hurd, with the true spirit of an underling, persisted in keeping up the petty traffic of reciprocal encomiums, yet Warburton was lost to the public long before he sunk into dotage, and lay dead as an author for many years of his natural existence.

We have imputed this rapid decline of his reputation, partly to the unsoundness of his general speculations, and chiefly to the offensiveness of his manner. The fact is admitted even by those who pretend to regret it ; and, whatever Dr. Hurd may have thought, it must have had other causes than the decay of public virtue and taste.

In fact, when we look quietly and soberly over the vehement and imposing treatises of Warburton, it is scarcely possible not to perceive, that almost every thing that is original in his doctrine or propositions is erroneous ; and that his great gifts of learning and argumentation have been bestowed on a vain attempt to give currency to untenable paradoxes. His powers and his skill in controversy may indeed conceal, from a careless reader, the radical fallacy of his reasoning ; and as, in the course of the argument, he frequently has the better of his adversaries upon incidental and collateral topics, and never fails to make his triumph resound over the whole field of battle, it is easy to understand how he should, for a while, have got the credit of a victory, which is now generally adjudged to his opponents. The object of ‘the Divine Legation,’ for instance, is to prove, that the mission of Moses was certainly from God,—because his system is the only one which does *not* teach the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments ! And the object of ‘the Alliance’ is to show, that the church (that is, as he explains it, all the adherents of the church of England) is entitled to a legal *establishment*, and the protection of a *test law*,—because it constitutes a *separate society* from that which is concerned in the civil government, and, being equally sovereign and independent, is therefore entitled to treat with it on a footing of perfect equality. The sixth book of Virgil, we are told, in like manner, contains merely the description of the mysteries of Eleusis ; and the badness of the New Testament Greek is a conclusive proof of the eloquence and inspiration of its authors. These fancies, it appears to us, require no refutation ; and, dazzled and astonished as we are at the rich and variegated tissue of learning and argument with which their author has invested their extravagance, we conceive that no man of a sound and plain understanding can ever mistake them for

truths, or waver, in the least degree, from the conviction which his own reflection must afford of their absurdity.

The case is very nearly the same with his subordinate general propositions, which, in so far as they are original, are all brought forward with the parade of great discoveries, and yet appear to us among the most futile and erroneous of modern speculations. We are tempted to mention two, which we think we have seen referred to by later writers with some degree of approbation, and which, at any rate, make a capital figure in all the fundamental philosophy of Warburton. The one relates to the necessary imperfection of human laws, as dealing in punishments only, and not in rewards also. The other concerns his notion of the ultimate foundation of moral obligation.

The very basis of his argument for the necessity of the doctrine of a future state to the well-being of society, is, that, by human laws, the conduct of men is only controuled by the fear of punishment, and not excited by the hope of reward. *Both* these sanctions, however, he contends, are necessary to regulate our actions, and keep the world in order; and therefore, legislators, not finding rewards in this world, have always been obliged to connect it with a future world, in which they have held out that they would be bestowed on all deservers. It is scarcely possible, we believe, to put this most important doctrine on a more injudicious foundation; and if this were the only ground either for believing or inculcating the doctrine of a future state, we should tremble at the advantages which the infidel would have in the contest. We shall not detain our readers longer, than just to point out three obvious fallacies in this, the most vaunted and confident, perhaps, of all the Warburtonian dogmata. In the *first* place, it is obvious that *disorders* in society can scarcely be said to be prevented by the hope of future rewards. The proper use of that doctrine is, not to repress vice, but to console affliction. Vice and disorder are quelled by the dread of future punishment. The despondency and distress that are soothed by the prospect of future bliss, are not *disorders* within the purview of the legislator. In the *second* place, it is obviously not true that human laws are *necessarily* deficient in the article of providing rewards. In many instances, their enactments have this direct object; and it is obvious, that if it was thought essential to the well-being of society, they might reward as often as they punish. But, in the *third* place, the whole argument proceeds upon a gross and unaccountable misapprehension of the nature and object of legislation;—a very brief explanation of which will show, both that the temporal rewards of virtue are just as sure as the temporal punishments of vice, and at the same time explain why the law has so seldom interfered to enforce the former. The law arose from human feelings and notions of justice; and those feelings and notions were, of course, before the law. The natural and necessary effect of kind and virtuous conduct is, to excite love, gratitude, and benevolence;—the effect of injury and vice is to excite resentment, anger, and revenge. While there was no law and no magistrate, men must have acted upon those feelings, and acted upon them in their whole extent. He who rendered kindness, received kindness; and he who inflicted pain and suffering, was sooner or later overtaken by retorted pain and suffering. Virtue was rewarded, therefore, and vice punished, at all times; and both, we must suppose, in the same measure and degree. The reward of virtue, however, produced no disturbance or disorder; and, after society submitted

to regulation, was safely left in the hands of gratitude and sympathetic kindness. It was otherwise with the punishment of vice. Resentment and revenge tended always to a dangerous excess,—were liable to be assumed as the pretext for unprovoked aggression,—and, at all events, had a tendency to reproduce revenge and resentment, in an interminable series of violence and outrage. The law, therefore, took this duty into its own hands. It did not invent, or impose for the first time, that sanction of punishment which was coeval with vice and with society, and is implied, indeed, in the very notion of injury:—it only transferred the right of applying it from the injured individual to the public; and tempered its application by more impartial and extensive views of the circumstances of the delinquency. But if the punishment of vice be not ultimately derived from law, neither is the reward of virtue; and although human passions made it necessary for law to undertake the regulation of that punishment, it evidently would not add to its perfection, to make it also the distributor of rewards, unless it could be shown that a similar disorder was likely to arise from leaving these to the individuals affected. It is obvious, however, not only that there is no likelihood of such a disorder, but that such an interference would be absurd and impracticable. It is true, therefore, that human laws do in general provide punishments only, and not rewards; but it is not true, that they are, on this account, imperfect or defective, or that human conduct is not actually regulated by the love of happiness, as much as by the dread of suffering. The doctrine of a future state adds, no doubt, prodigiously to *both* these motives; but it is a rash, a presumptuous, and, we think, a most shortsighted and narrow view of the case, to suppose, that it is chiefly the impossibility of rewarding virtue on earth, that has led legislators to secure the peace of society, by referring it for its recompense to Heaven.

The other dogma to which we alluded, is advanced with equal confidence and pretension; and is, if possible, still more shallow and erroneous. Speculative moralists had been formerly contented with referring moral obligation, either to a moral sense, or to a perception of utility;—Warburton, without much ceremony, put both these together: But his grand discovery is, that even this tie is not strong enough; and that the idea of moral obligation is altogether incomplete and imperfect, unless it be made to rest also on *the will of a superior*. There is no point in all his philosophy, of which he is more vain than of this pretended discovery; and he speaks of it, we are persuaded, twenty times, without once suspecting the gross fallacy which it involves. The fallacy is not, however, in stating an erroneous proposition—for it is certainly true, that the command of a superior will generally constitute an obligation: it lies altogether in supposing that this is a separate or additional ground of obligation,—and in not seeing that this vaunted discovery of a third principle for the foundation of morality, was in fact nothing but an individual instance or exemplification of the principle of utility. Why are we bound by the will of a superior?—evidently for no other reason, than because superiority implies a *power* to affect our *happiness*; and the expression of will assures us, that our happiness will be affected by our disobedience. An obligation is something which constrains or induces us to act;—but there neither is nor can be any other motive for the actions of rational and sentient beings, than the love of happiness. It

is the desire of happiness—well or ill understood—seen widely or narrowly,—that necessarily dictates all our actions, and is at the bottom of all our conceptions of morality or duty : and the will of a superior can only constitute a ground of obligation, by connecting itself with this single and universal agent. If it were possible to disjoin the idea of our own happiness or suffering from the idea of a superior, it is obvious that we should no longer be under any obligation to conform to the will of that superior. If we should be equally secure of happiness—in mind and in body—in time and in eternity, by disobeying his will, as by complying with it, it is evidently altogether inconceivable, that the expression of that will should impose any obligation upon us : and although it be true that we cannot suppose such a case, it is not the less a fallacy to represent the will of a superior as a third and additional ground of obligation, newly discovered by this author, and superadded to the old principle of a regard to happiness, or utility. We take these instances of the general unsoundness of all Warburton's peculiar doctrines, from topics on which he is generally supposed to have been less extravagant than on any other. Those who wish to know his feats in criticism, may be referred to the canons of Mr. Edwards : and those who admire the originality of his Dissertation on the Mysteries, are recommended to look into the *Eleusis* of *Meursius*.

Speculations like these could never be popular ; and were not likely to attract the attention, even of the studious, longer than their novelty, and the glare of erudition and originality which was thrown around them, protected them from deliberate consideration. But the real cause of the public alienation from the works of this writer, is undoubtedly to be found in the revolting arrogance of his general manner, and the offensive coarseness of his controversial invectives. These, we think, must be confessed to be somewhat worse than mere error in reasoning, or extravagance in theory. They are not only offences of the first magnitude against good taste and good manners, but are likely to be attended with pernicious consequences in matters of much higher importance. Though there is no reason, we think, to doubt of the sincerity of this reverend person's abhorrence for vice and infidelity, we are seriously of opinion, that his writings have been substantially prejudicial to the cause of religion and morality ; and that it is fortunate for both, that they have now fallen into general oblivion.

They have produced, in the first place, all the mischief of a conspicuous, and, in some sense, a successful example of genius and learning, associated with insolence, intolerance, and habitual contumely and outrage. All men who are engaged in controversy are apt enough to be abusive and insulting,—and clergymen, perhaps, rather more apt than others. It is an intellectual warfare, in which it is *natural*, we suspect, to be ferocious, unjust, and unsparing : but experience and civilization have tempered this vehemence, by gentler and more generous maxims,—and introduced a law of honourable hostility, by which the fiercer elements of our nature are mastered and controuled. No greater evil, perhaps, can be imagined, than the violation of this law from any quarter of influence and reputation ;—yet the Warburtonians may be said to have done their endeavour to introduce the use of poisoned weapons, and to abolish the practice of giving quarter in the fields of controversy. Fortunately, their example has not been generally followed ; and the sect itself, though graced with

mitres, and other trophies of worldly success, has perished, we think, in consequence of the experiment.

A second, and perhaps a still more formidable mischief, arose from the discredit which was brought on the priesthood, and indeed upon religion in general, by this interchange of opprobrious and insulting accusations among its ministers. If the abuse was justifiable, then the church itself gave shelter to folly and wickedness, at least as great as was to be found under the banners of infidelity;—if it was not justifiable, then it was apparent, that the abuse of these holy men was no proof of demerit in those against whom it was directed; and the unbelievers, of course, were furnished with an objection to the sincerity of those invectives of which they themselves were the objects.

This applies to those indecent expressions of violence and contempt, in which Warburton and his followers were accustomed to indulge, when speaking of their christian and clerical opponents. But the greatest evil of all, we think, arose from the intemperance, coarseness, and acrimony of their remarks, even on those who were enemies to revelation. There is, in all well constituted minds, a natural feeling of indulgence towards those errors of opinion, to which, from the infirmity of human reason, all men are liable, and of compassion for those whose errors have endangered their happiness. It must be the natural tendency of all candid and liberal persons, therefore, to regard unbelievers with pity, and to reason with them with mildness and forbearance. Infidel writers, we conceive, may generally be allowed to be actual unbelievers; for it is difficult to imagine what other motive than a sincere persuasion of the truth of their opinions, could induce them to become objects of horror to the respectable part of any community by their disclosure. From what vices of the heart, or from what defects in the understanding, their unbelief may have originated, it may not always be easy to determine; but it seems obvious that, for the unbelief itself, they are rather to be pitied than reviled; and that the most effectual way of persuading the public that their opinions are refuted out of a regard to human happiness, is to treat their authors (whose happiness is most in danger) with some small degree of liberality and gentleness. It is also pretty generally taken for granted, that a very angry disputant is usually in the wrong; that it is not a sign of much confidence in the argument, to take advantage of the unpopularity or legal danger of the opposite doctrine; and that, when an unsuccessful and unfair attempt is made to discredit the general ability or personal worth of an antagonist, no great reliance is understood to be placed on the argument by which he may be lawfully opposed.

It is needless to apply these observations to the case of the Warburtonian controversies. There is no man, we believe, however he may be convinced of the fallacy and danger of the principles maintained by Lord Bolingbroke, by Voltaire, or by Hume, who has not felt indignation and disgust at the brutal violence, the affected contempt, and the flagrant unfairness with which they are treated by this learned author,—who has not, for a moment, taken part with them against so ferocious and insulting an opponent, and wished for the mortification and chastisement of the advocate, even while impressed with the greatest veneration for the cause. We contemplate this scene of orthodox fury, in short, with something of the same emotions with which we should see a heretic subjected to the torture, or a freethinker led out to the stake

by a zealous inquisitor. If this, however, be the effect of such illiberal violence, even on those whose principles are settled, and whose faith is confirmed by habit and reflection, the consequences must obviously be infinitely more pernicious for those whose notions of religion are still unformed and immature, and whose minds are open to all plausible and liberal impressions. Take the case, for instance, of a young man, who has been delighted with the eloquence of Bolingbroke, and the sagacity and ingenuity of Hume;—who knows, moreover, that the one lived in intimacy with Pope and Swift, and almost all the worthy and eminent persons of his time;—and that the other was the cordial friend of Robertson and Blair, and was irreproachably correct and amiable in every relation of life;—and who, perceiving with alarm the tendency of some of their speculations, applies to Warburton for an antidote to the poison he may have imbibed. In Warburton he will then read that Bolingbroke was a paltry driveller—Voltaire a pitiable scoundrel—and Hume a puny dialectician, who ought to be set on the pillory, and whose heart was as base and corrupt as his understanding is contemptible! Now, what, we would ask any man of common candour and observation, is the effect which is likely to be produced on the mind of any ingenuous and able young man by this style of confutation? Infallibly to make him take part with the reviled and insulted literati,—to throw aside the right reverend confuter with contempt and disgust,—and most probably to conceive a fatal prejudice against the cause of religion itself, thus unhappily associated with coarse and ignoble scurrility. He must know to a certainty, in the first place, that *the contempt* of the orthodox champion is either affected, or proceeds from most gross ignorance and incapacity;—since the ability of the reviled writers is proved, not only by his own feeling and experience, but by the suffrage of the public and of all men of intelligence. He must think, in the second place, that the imputations on their *moral worth* are false and calumnious, both from the fact of their long friendship with the purest and most exalted characters of their age, and from the obvious irrelevancy of this topic in a fair refutation of their errors;—and then, applying the ordinary maxims by which we judge of a disputant's cause, from his temper and his fairness, he disables both the judgment and the candour of his instructor, and conceives a strong prejudice in favour of the cause which has been attacked in a manner so unwarrantable.

We have had occasion, oftener than once, to trace an effect like this, from this fierce and overbearing aspect of orthodoxy;—and we appeal to the judgment of all our readers, whether it be not the very effect which it is calculated to produce on all youthful minds of the least strength and originality. It is to such persons, however, and to such only, that the refutation of infidel writers ought to be addressed. There is no need to write books against Hume and Voltaire for the use of the learned and orthodox part of the English clergy. Such works are necessarily supposed to be intended for the benefit of young persons, who have either contracted some partiality for these seductive writers, or are otherwise in danger of being misled by them. It is to be presumed, therefore, that they know and admire their real excellences;—and it might consequently be inferred, that they will not listen with peculiar complacency to a refutation of their errors, which sets out with a torrent of illiberal and unjust abuse of their talents and characters.

We are convinced, therefore, that the bullying and abusive tone of the Warburtonian school, even in its contention with infidels, has done more harm to the cause of religion, and alienated more youthful and aspiring minds from the true faith, than any other error into which zeal has ever betrayed orthodoxy. It may afford a sort of vindictive delight to the zealots who stand in no need of the instruction of which it should be the vehicle; but it will, to a certainty, revolt and disgust all those to whom that instruction was necessary,—enlist all the generous feelings of their nature on the side of infidelity,—and make piety and reason itself appear like prejudice and bigotry. We think it fortunate, therefore, upon the whole, that the controversial writings of Warburton are already sunk in oblivion,—since, even if we thought more highly than we do of the substantial merit of his arguments, we should still be of opinion that they were likely to do more mischief than the greater part of the sophistries which it was their professed object to counteract and discredit.

PALEY.*

THE name of Dr. Paley, though scarcely to be reckoned among those of the *great* theologians and philosophers of England, is probably associated with as large and as enviable a portion of public approbation, as that of any living ecclesiastic. With less learning and less originality than some of his distinguished predecessors, it would be difficult, perhaps, to point out his superior in soundness of judgment, or in vigilant and comprehensive sagacity. With great strength of reasoning and power of decision, he has also united more moderation and liberality of sentiment, than is usually to be found among disputants; and added weight to his argument by a certain plainness and sobriety of manner, that is infinitely better calculated to produce conviction than the sallies of an ambitious eloquence.

His great merit lies in the clear perception of the strong or the difficult parts of a question, and in the judicious selection and perspicuous arrangement of his arguments: invention is less within his province; and, even when his conclusions appear to partake of originality, it will commonly be found that they have been suggested by a minute and scrupulous examination of propositions that had been furnished by others. His common way is, to break down a subject into as many distinct parts as it really appears to contain, and to make each of them the subject of a separate and rigorous investigation. In consequence of this, his arguments frequently appear to be narrow and circumscribed in their application; and the reader is sometimes apt to wish for the excursive speculation and ample range of a less accurate reasoner. The truth is, however, that, upon many subjects, it is impossible to attain precision, without this formality and detail. Sophistry always delights in generalities; and fallacy is never so safe from detection, as when inquiry is eluded by rapidity of progression, and the mind hurried from one half view of a subject to another, without ever being permitted to reflect upon what has been presented to it.

* Dr. Paley's Natural Theology. — Vol. i. page 287. January, 1803.

Almost all the writings of Dr. Paley relate to the highest and most important questions upon which human reason can be exercised, and appear to have been composed with suitable caution and deliberation. They are elaborate, rather than ingenious; and seem to have been diligently meditated, and carefully arranged, rather than to have been conceived in any fervour of imagination, or poured forth in any conviction of their infallibility. The utmost pains are taken, therefore, to render every thing intelligible and precise; and more anxiety is shown, that nothing necessary shall be omitted, than that all superfluity should be excluded. All cavil is prevented by a jealous strictness of expression; and a few homely illustrations are commonly sufficient to expose those illusions, by which a false philosophy is supported in so many of her unsubstantial speculations.

The progress of time, and the improving ingenuity of scepticism, have given a new aspect to all our philosophical productions. It is no longer enough for a writer on morality or religion to explain and enforce his own conceptions upon those important subjects; he must make way for their reception by the extirpation of a multitude of errors, and must be upon the alert at every stage of his progress. He must advance with circumspection as well as boldness, and fortify every position against the attacks of a vigilant and formidable adversary. As the forms of error, too, are infinite and contradictory, he must incessantly be changing his posture of defence, or direction of attack; what serves for the confutation of one set of opponents, being frequently the pretext of hostility to a second. In this situation, the management of such subjects can only be entrusted with safety to skilful reasoners, and expert logicians; men, who will neither give quarter to sophistry, nor consume their forces in unprofitable contentions; who will confine their hostility to the proper object of resentment, and neither use their victories with insolence, nor refuse to yield what they have neither power nor inducement to retain. The great art in all controversies of this nature, is, first, to bring the argument to a point, and then to urge it steadily and closely to an issue. We do not know any writer who has observed both precepts with greater judgment and address than Dr. Paley. All this we say in reference to his former publications: that which is now before us will not detract from his reputation, and probably will not extend it.

On the subject of Natural Theology, no one looks for originality, and no one pretends to discovery. Its great disadvantage is its extreme simplicity, and the vast multiplicity of obvious and decisive evidences that may every where be found for its illustration. The great book of the universe lies open to all mankind; and he who cannot read in it the name and the titles of its Author, will probably derive but little benefit from the labours of any commentator: their instructions may elucidate a few dark passages, and exalt our admiration of many that we already perceive to be beautiful: but the bulk of the volume is legible, without assistance; and, much as we may find out by study and meditation, it will still be as nothing, in comparison with what is forced upon our apprehension. No thinking man, we conceive, can doubt that there are marks of design in the universe; and any enumeration of the instances in which this design is manifest, appears, at first sight, to be both unnecessary and impossible. A single example seems altogether as conclusive as a thousand: and he that cannot discover any traces of contrivance in the formation of an eye, will probably

retain his atheism at the end of a whole system of physiology. We are apt therefore to suspect, that the chief value of those publications that aim at establishing the being of an intelligent Creator, by a copious induction of the marks of intelligence in the creation, consists, either in their subserviency to the pleasures of devout meditation, or in the novelty, arrangement, and importance of the physical truths they contain. Upon a more mature consideration, however, we are persuaded that this is but a secondary merit in the work that is now before us, and that the reverend author has done a great, and by no means an unnecessary service, to the cause of religion by its publication. It may be worth while to consider in what its utility principally consists, and what is the chief difference between the task of an advocate of natural theology in former, and in the present times.

The ancient sceptics seem to have had nothing to set up against a designing Deity, but the obscure omnipotency of Chance, and the experimental combinations of a chaos of restless atoms. The task of the Theistic philosophers was, therefore, abundantly easy in those days; and though their physical science was by no means very correct or extensive, they seem to have performed it in a bold and satisfactory manner. They appealed at once to the order and symmetry of nature, and to the regularity and magnificence of the grand structure of the universe. The great phenomena of the heavens, in particular, appear to have arrested their attention; and the magnitude and uniformity of the planetary movements, seem to have afforded a sufficient proof of Divine power and intelligence. It did not appear to them any objection to this argument, that nothing analogous to those phenomena could be found among the products of human intelligence, or that they were unable to explain the means which Divine Wisdom had employed to produce them. ‘*Quis hunc hominem dixerit,*’ says Cicero, ‘*qui cum tam certos cœli motus, tam ratos astrorum ordines, tamque inter se connexa et apta viderit, neget his ullam inesse rationem, eoque casu fieri dicat, quæ quanto consilio gerantur, nullo consilio assequi possumus?*’

In this broad and general way did the theists of antiquity propose their evidence of the Divine intelligence; finding it easier, and probably thinking it more magnificent, and better suited to the dignity of the Deity, that the proofs of his existence should be derived from the great and sublime parts of his creation, than from the petty contrivances of animal or vegetable organization. If a sovereign mind was allowed to have planned the great system of the universe, they had no objection to admit, that bees and worms might be generated spontaneously, or even that men and animals might be hatched by the heat of the sun on the fertile banks of the Nile.

In the mean time, physical science was making slow but continual advances; and curious inquirers were able to penetrate into the more immediate causes of many of the appearances of nature. Elated with these discoveries, which ought to have increased their veneration for the supreme Contriver of the whole, they immediately fancied they had found out the great secret of nature; and, ascribing imaginary qualities and energies to different classes of bodies, they dethroned the Deity by the agency of secondary causes, and erected a system of materialism in his stead. It was in those circumstances, we are persuaded, that certain false opinions as to the opposition of religion and philosophy originated, though they have been revived and maintained, in later times, by causes of a different description. Those whose dispositions

inclined them to devout contemplation, were accustomed to look upon the wonders of nature in the gross; to consider them as environed with a certain awful mystery; and to discountenance every attempt to pry into their origin, as a presumptuous and profane interference with the councils of Omnipotence. Inquisitive naturalists, on the other hand, were apt to forget the Lawgiver in their zealous admiration of the law; and, mocking at the pious horror of the ignorant, considered the mighty fabric of the universe as little better than a piece of mechanical jugglery, that could only command our admiration, while the cause of its movements was concealed.

This, however, was an error that was rectified by the progress of those very speculations by which it had apparently been produced. When men began to reason more correctly upon the appearances of nature, they soon learned to perceive that the minute texture of animal and vegetable bodies contained more wonderful indications of contrivance and design than the great masses of astronomy; and that, from the greater complication of their parts, and our more intimate experience of their uses, they were infinitely better fitted to attest the adaptation of means to ends, than the remoter wonders of the heavens. Boyle and Newton carried this principle of philosophical piety along with them into all their speculations. The microscopical observers caught the same spirit. Ray and Derham successively digested all the physics of their day into a system of natural theology. A late editor of Dr. Derham has inserted most of the modern discoveries: and, as nothing useful or meritorious can be safe from the zeal of injudicious admirers, a genius of Germany has recently presented the public with a demonstration of the being and attributes of the Deity, deduced from the history and habitudes of *insects*.

In this situation, it may at first sight appear to have been superfluous for Dr. Paley to come forward with a new work upon a subject in itself so simple, and already so learnedly discussed. It is to be observed, however, that most of the preceding publications are addressed to readers that are supposed to be already entirely convinced of the existence of a designing Creator, and seem to have been chiefly intended to promote a habit of pious meditation, and to afford materials for devout reflection on the goodness and wisdom of the Deity. They are not constructed, at least, with any express reference to the objections of atheistical writers, and neither guard against the cavils which they have made as to certain parts of the evidence, nor directly confute the false constructions they have attempted to put upon others. A work was still wanted, therefore, in which the evidences of a wise and beneficent Creator might be detailed with sufficient amplitude, while every thing was omitted that the most scrupulous scepticism could challenge, and in which the fallacy of every atheistical hypothesis might be distinctly exposed, both by a strict examination of its principle, and by the selection of such obvious phenomena as were inconsistent with the supposition of its truth. Such a work we conceive Dr. Paley had in view to compose when he entered upon this subject, and such undoubtedly is the plan and the tendency of the publication now before us.

ALISON.

REMARKS ON ALISON'S SERMONS.*

THE style of these Sermons is something new, we think, in the literature of this country. It is more uniformly elevated, more profusely figured—and, above all, more curiously modulated, and balanced upon a more exact and delicate rythm, than any English composition in mere prose with which we are acquainted. In these, as well as in some more substantial characteristics, it reminds us more of the beautiful moral harangues that occur in the *Telemaque* of Fenelon, or of the celebrated *Oraisons Funebres* of Bossuet, than of any thing of British growth and manufacture:—Nor do we hesitate at all to set Mr. Alison fairly down by the side of the last named of those illustrious Prelates. He is less lofty, perhaps; but more tender and more varied—less splendid, but less theatrical—and, with fewer striking reflections on particular occurrences, has unquestionably more of the broad light of philosophy, and the milder glow of religion. In polish and dignity we do not think him at all inferior—though he has not the advantage of enhancing the simple majesty of Christianity by appeals to listening monarchs, and apostrophes to departed princes.

From the very suggestion of this parallel, it will be understood, that the strain of the discourses before us is never careless or even familiar—perhaps not always quite natural—but uniformly graceful, engaging and impressive; and at least as far removed from the parade of a frigid rhetoric, as from the rude energy of tempestuous passion or untutored enthusiasm. If they do not abound in those bursts and flashes of eloquence which constitute the sublime of such compositions, they have all the richness, and warmth and softness which make up their beauty; and are intimately felt to be the works of a mind at once delicate and ardent, guided by the purest taste and the most amiable feelings—and pleasing itself with bestowing a careful finish on its expressions, not more from an instinctive love of all that is beautiful and harmonious, than from an unfeigned affection and concern for the subjects on which it is employed.

We do not know, in fact, any sermons so pleasing—or so likely both to be popular, and to do good to those who are pleased with them. All the feelings are generous and gentle—all the sentiments liberal—and all the general views just and ennobling. They are calculated to lead us on to piety, through the purification of our taste, and the culture of our social affections—to found the love of God on the love of Nature and of Man—and to purge the visual orb of the soul for the contemplation of the infinite majesty of the Creator, by teaching it to recognize the unspeakable beauty and grandeur which reigns in all the aspects of his physical and moral creation. They are not, however, sermons for profound scholars or learned divines. They contain no display of erudition, nor profess to settle any knotty points in theology. Such labours have their value no doubt, and are entitled to their praise; nor is it a light praise to have consecrated

* Sermons, chiefly on Particular Occasions, by Archibald Alison LL.D.—Vol. xxiii. page 425. September, 1814.

the fruits of long study and scientific research to the illustration of what is dark, or the confirmation of what is doubtful in the foundations of our faith: but we have always thought that discussions such as these could be embodied in no form less suitable to their substance than that of sermons in the vulgar tongue—or, in other words, discourses orally delivered to a promiscuous audience, the greater part of which is necessarily incapable either of following or of appreciating the merits of the reasoning—and no part of which could presume to judge of it on a mere transient recitation of the positions and authorities. There are no subjects in fact that require so patient a collation of books, and so frequent a recurrence to the early steps of our argument, as the abstruse and weighty matters that form the topics of theological controversy,—either with argumentative infidels, or the learned advocates of an erroneous faith. Such discussions, therefore, are most properly made the subject of books, or of academical instruction: but we conceive it to be nothing less than a perversion of the great purposes of ordinary preaching, to substitute them in the place of those weekly discourses by which the morals of a whole congregation are to be improved, or their devotion awakened.

It is not easy to overrate the importance of doing this effectually and well; and when we consider how great a proportion of readers are as careless—as impatient of long dissertations, and at the same time as vacant and open to all lively impressions as the mass of an ordinary congregation, it is not easy to calculate how much good may be effected, when a pastor, who has discovered the secret of doing this, is pleased to enlarge his audience by means of the press, and to extend the benefit of his exhortations to all who are enrolled in his flock by the mere act of becoming his readers. For one man whose understanding is perplexed by the false doctrines or false philosophy, which it is the object of a Stillingfleet, a Clarke, or a Horsley, to redargue and expose, we may be assured there are at least a thousand who stand in need of the excitement and suggestions which may be furnished by the volume before us—who want to be roused to a sense of the beauty and the good that exist in the universe around them—and who are only indifferent to the feelings of their fellow-creatures, and negligent of the duties they impose, for want of some persuasive monitor to awake the dormant capacities of their nature, and to make them see and feel the delights which Providence has attached to their exercise. It is lamentable, indeed, to think how many pass through life, without tasting the highest gratification, or exerting the noblest functions of their being, from no other cause than the want of some such excitement; and how many of those who have been happily distinguished for both, are able to trace back the first dawnings of that moral and intellectual existence to the accidental perusal of some work, far less fitted to produce that effect than the least of the discourses of Mr. Alison.

We are not acquainted, indeed, with any work so well fitted for the purpose; or calculated to make so beneficial an impression on the minds of those to whom such topics have not hitherto been familiar. The beauty of the style and the imagery, is almost sure to attract the attention in the first place; and the mind must be dull and sullen indeed, that offers a long resistance to the stronger charm of that indulgent philanthropy—of that warm sensibility to goodness and

beauty — that amiable sympathy with youth, and innocence, and enjoyment — and that holy hope and cheerful confidence in the ultimate and universal happiness of a creation proceeding from omnipotent love — which form the grand characteristics of these eloquent discourses.

Their faults — since there must be faults in every thing that passes through our hands — are, in the first place, a little mannerism and monotony — arising from the too uniform melody of the composition, and from that emphatic tone which prevails too universally, not to become, on some occasions, both wearisome and ineffective. The necessity which the author seems to have imposed on himself, of always filling and satisfying the ear, sometimes leaves the mind unsatisfied; and an harmonious close now and then conducts us to a weak or ordinary meaning. Another, and something of a kindred fault, may perhaps be ascribed to the necessary brevity of a modern sermon. Large and comprehensive views are sometimes just opened, and then deserted, or dismissed with very slight consideration; — a sort of philosophical grandeur and majestic wisdom in the beginning of a discourse now and then holds out a promise, where there is no space left for the performance. We have scarcely admired the stateliness of the vestibule, when the door of the temple itself is closed against us: — and the lofty prelude has but just summoned us to attention, when the music is broken off, or passes to a differing measure.

We turn now to what may be called the Political discourses; and, disgusted as we have been with the hollow vaunting and hostile imprecations with which most of our pulpits have resounded for the last twenty years — we turn to them with a feeling of exultation and delight, which neither the recollection of our past misfortunes, or of our recent deliverance, can abate or repress. They are full of heroic patriotism, christian humility, and prophetic confidence: — no more eloquent or animating exhortations were ever addressed to men arming for their country; — no more upright and temperate sentiments ever expressed, on occasions of great public interest and dissension; — no more weighty and liberal truths ever urged upon the conscience of an intelligent people. Independent altogether of their merit as splendid pieces of eloquence, we know no compositions better calculated to fix, in all youthful and ingenuous minds, an ardent and exalted love of their country, and a knowledge of the reasons for which it should be loved.

It is a fine thing, we make no doubt, to compose a learned commentary on the prophet Hosea, or a profound dissertation on the intermediate state of the soul; — but we would prefer doing what Mr. Alison has done in the volume before us: And can hardly help envying the talents by which he has clothed so much wisdom in so much beauty — and made us find, in the same work, the highest gratifications of taste, and the noblest lessons of virtue.

BISHOP HEBER.*

WE have no Bishops on our Establishment; and have been accustomed to think that we are better without them. But if we could persuade ourselves that bishops in general were at all like Bishop Heber, we should tremble for our Presbyterian Orthodoxy, and feel not only veneration, but something very like envy, for a communion which could number many such men among its ministers.

The notion entertained of a Bishop, in our antiepiscopal latitudes, is likely enough, we admit, not to be altogether just:—and we are far from upholding it as correct, when we say, that a Bishop, among us, is generally supposed to be a stately and pompous person, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day—somewhat obsequious to persons in power, and somewhat haughty and imperative to those who are beneath him—with more authority in his tone and manner, than solidity in his learning; and yet with much more learning than charity or humility—very fond of being called my Lord, and driving about in a coach with mitres on the panels, but little addicted to visiting the sick and fatherless, or earning for himself the blessing of those who are ready to perish—

————— ‘ Familiar with a round
Of ladyships—a stranger to the poor ’—

decorous in manners, but no foe to luxurious indulgences—rigid in maintaining discipline among his immediate dependents, and in exacting the homage due to his dignity from the undignified mob of his brethren; but perfectly willing to leave to them the undivided privileges of comforting and of teaching their people, and of soothing the sins and sorrows of their erring flocks—scornful, if not openly hostile, upon all occasions, to the claims of the people, from whom he is generally sprung—and presuming every thing in favour of the royal will and prerogative, by which he has been exalted—setting, indeed, in all cases, a much higher value on the privileges of the few, than the rights that are common to all, and exerting himself strenuously that the former may ever prevail—caring more, accordingly, for the interests of his order than the general good of the church, and far more for the church than for the religion it was established to teach—hating dissenters still more bitterly than infidels—but combating both rather with obloquy and invocation of civil penalties, than with the artillery of a powerful reason, or the reconciling influences of an humble and holy life—uttering now and then haughty professions of humility, and regularly bewailing, at fit seasons, the severity of those Episcopal labours, which sadden, and even threaten to abridge a life, which to all other eyes appears to flow on in almost unbroken leisure and continued indulgence.

This, or something like this, we take to be the notion that most of us Presbyterians have been used to entertain of a modern Bishop: and it is mainly because they believed that the rank and opulence which the station implied, were likely to realize this character in those who should be placed it, that our ancestors contended so strenuously for the abrogation of the order, and thought their Reformation incomplete till it was finally put down—till all the ministers of the Gospel were truly

* Bishop Heber's Journal, 2 Vols. London, 1828.—Vol. xlviii. page 313. December, 1828.

pastors of souls, and stood in no other relation to each other than as fellow labourers in the same vineyard. If this notion be utterly erroneous, the picture which Bishop Heber has here drawn of himself, must tend powerfully to correct it. If, on the other hand, it be in any respect just, he must be allowed, at all events, to have been a splendid exception. We are willing to take it either way ; though we must say that we incline rather to the latter alternative — since it is difficult to suppose, with all due allowance for prejudices, that our abstract idea of a Bishop should be in such flagrant contradiction to the truth, that one who was merely a fair specimen of the order, should be most accurately characterised by precisely reversing every thing that entered into that idea. Yet this is manifestly the case with Bishop Heber, of whom we do not know at this moment how we could give a better description, than by merely *reading backwards* all we have ventured to set down as characteristic of his right reverend brethren. Learned, polished, and dignified, he was undoubtedly ; yet far more conspicuously kind, humble, tolerant, and laborious — zealous for his church too, and not forgetful of his station ; but remembering it more for the duties than for the honours that were attached to it, and infinitely more zealous for the religious improvement, and for the happiness, and spiritual and worldly good of his fellow creatures of every tongue, faith, and complexion : indulgent to all errors and infirmities — liberal, in the best and truest sense of the word — humble and conscientiously diffident of his own excellent judgment and never-failing charity — looking on all men as the children of one God, on all Christians as the redeemed of one Saviour, and on all Christian teachers as fellow labourers, bound to help and encourage each other in their arduous and anxious task. His portion of the work, accordingly, he wrought faithfully, zealously, and well ; and, devoting himself to his duty with a truly apostolical fervour, made no scruple to forego for its sake, not merely his personal ease and comfort, but those domestic affections which were ever so much more valuable in his eyes, and in the end, we fear, consummating the sacrifice with his life ! If such a character be common among the dignitaries of the English Church, we sincerely congratulate them on the fact, and bow our heads in homage and veneration before them. If it be rare, as we fear it must be, in any church, we trust we do no unworthy service in pointing it out for honour and imitation to all ; in praying that the example, in all its parts, may promote the growth of similar virtues among all denominations of Christians, in every region of the world.

FRANKLIN.*

THIS self-taught American is the most rational, perhaps, of all philosophers. He never loses sight of common sense in any of his speculations ; and when his philosophy does not consist entirely in its fair and vigorous application, it is always regulated and controlled by it in its application and result. No individual, perhaps, ever possessed

* The Works of Dr. Franklin.—Vol. viii page 327. July, 1806.

a juster understanding, or was so seldom obstructed in the use of it, by indolence, enthusiasm, or authority.

Dr. Franklin received no regular education; and he spent the greater part of his life in a society where there was no relish, and no encouragement for literature. On an ordinary mind, these circumstances would have produced their usual effects, of repressing all sort of intellectual ambition or activity, and perpetuating a generation of incurious mechanics: but to an understanding like Franklin's, we cannot help considering them as peculiarly propitious, and imagine that we can trace back to them, distinctly, almost all the peculiarities of his intellectual character.

Regular education, we think, is unfavourable to vigour or originality of understanding. Like civilization, it makes society more intelligent and agreeable; but it levels the distinctions of nature. It strengthens and assists the feeble; but it deprives the strong of his triumph, and casts down the hopes of the aspiring. It accomplishes this, not only by training up the mind in an habitual veneration for authorities, but, by leading us to bestow a disproportionate degree of attention upon studies that are only valuable as keys or instruments for the understanding, they come at last to be regarded as ultimate objects of pursuit; and the means of education are absurdly mistaken for its end. How many powerful understandings have been lost in the Dialectics of Aristotle! And of how much good philosophy are we daily defrauded, by the preposterous error of taking a knowledge of prosody for useful learning! The mind of a man, who has escaped this training, will at least have fair play. Whatever other errors he may fall into, he will be safe at least from these infatuations. If he thinks proper, after he grows up, to study Greek, it will be for some better purpose than to become acquainted with its dialects. His prejudices will be those of a man, and not of a schoolboy; and his speculations and conclusions will be independent of the maxims of tutors, and the oracles of literary patrons.

The consequences of living in a refined and literary community, are nearly of the same kind with those of a regular education. There are so many critics to be satisfied—so many qualifications to be established—so many rivals to encounter, and so much derision to be hazarded, that a young man is apt to be deterred from so perilous an enterprize, and led to seek for distinction in some safer line of exertion. He is discouraged by the fame and the perfection of certain models and favourites, who are always in the mouths of his judges, and, ‘under them, his genius is rebuked,’ and his originality repressed, till he sinks into a paltry copyist, or aims at distinction, by extravagance and affectation. In such a state of society, he feels that mediocrity has no chance of distinction: and what beginner can expect to rise at once into excellence? He imagines that mere good sense will attract no attention; and that the manner is of much more importance than the matter, in a candidate for public admiration. In his attention to the manner, the matter is apt to be neglected; and, in his solicitude to please those who require elegance of diction, brilliancy of wit, or harmony of periods, he is in some danger of forgetting that strength of reason, and accuracy of observation, by which he first proposed to recommend himself. His attention, when extended to so many collateral objects, is no longer vigorous or collected;—the stream, divided into so many channels, ceases to flow either deep or strong;—

he becomes an unsuccessful pretender to fine writing, and is satisfied with the frivolous praise of elegance or vivacity.

We are disposed to ascribe so much power to these obstructions to intellectual originality, that we cannot help fancying, that if Franklin had been bred in a college, he would have contented himself with expounding the metres of Pindar, and mixing argument with his port in the common room; and that if Boston had abounded with men of letters, he would never have ventured to come forth from his printing-house, or been driven back to it, at any rate, by the sneers of the critics, after the first publication of his *Essays in the Busy Body*.

This will probably be thought exaggerated; but it cannot be denied, we think, that the contrary circumstances in his history had a powerful effect in determining the character of his understanding, and in producing those peculiar habits of reasoning and investigation by which his writings are distinguished. He was encouraged to publish, because there was scarcely any one around him whom he could not easily excel. He wrote with great brevity, because he had not leisure for more voluminous compositions, and because he knew that the readers to whom he addressed himself were, for the most part, as busy as himself. For the same reason, he studied great perspicuity and simplicity of statement. His countrymen had no relish for fine writing, and could not easily be made to understand a deduction depending on a long or elaborate process of reasoning. He was forced, therefore, to concentrate what he had to say; and since he had no chance of being admired for the beauty of his composition, it was natural for him to aim at making an impression by the force and the clearness of his statements.

His conclusions were often rash and inaccurate, from the same circumstances which rendered his productions concise. Philosophy and speculation did not form the business of his life; nor did he dedicate himself to any particular study, with a view to exhaust and complete the investigation of it in all its parts, and under all its relations. He engaged in every interesting inquiry that suggested itself to him, rather as the necessary exercise of a powerful and active mind, than as a task which he had bound himself to perform. He cast a quick and penetrating glance over the facts and the *data* that were presented to him; and drew his conclusions with a rapidity and precision that have not often been equalled; but he did not stop to examine the completeness of the *data* upon which he proceeded, nor to consider the ultimate effect or application of the principles to which he had been conducted. In all questions, therefore, where the facts upon which he was to determine, and the materials from which his judgment was to be formed, were either few in number, or of such a nature as not to be overlooked, his reasonings are, for the most part, perfectly just and conclusive, and his decisions unexceptionably sound; but where the elements of the calculation were more numerous and widely scattered, it appears to us that he has often been precipitate, and that he has either been misled by a partial apprehension of the conditions of the problem, or has discovered only a portion of the truth which lay before him. In all physical inquiries; in almost all questions of particular and immediate policy; and in much of what relates to the practical wisdom and the happiness of private life, his views will be found to be admirable, and the reasoning by which they are supported most masterly and convincing. But upon subjects of general

politics, of abstract morality, and political economy, his notions appear to be more unsatisfactory and incomplete. He seems to have wanted leisure, and perhaps inclination also, to spread out before him the whole vast premises of these extensive sciences, and scarcely to have had patience to hunt for his conclusions through so wide and intricate a region as that upon which they invited him to enter. He has been satisfied, therefore, on every occasion, with reasoning from a very limited view of the facts, and often from a particular instance; he has done all that sagacity and sound sense could do with such materials: but it cannot excite wonder, if he has sometimes overlooked an essential part of the argument, and often advanced a particular truth into the place of a general principle. He seldom reasoned upon these subjects at all, we believe, without having some practical application of them immediately in view; and as he began the investigation rather to determine a particular case than to establish a general maxim, so he probably desisted as soon as he had relieved himself of the present difficulty.

There are not many among the thorough bred scholars and philosophers of Europe, who can lay claim to distinction in more than one or two departments of science or literature. The uneducated tradesman of America has left writings that call for our attention, in natural philosophy,—in politics,—in political economy,—and in general literature and morality.

Of his labours in the department of *Physics*, we do not propose to say much. They were almost all suggested by views of utility in the beginning, and were, without exception, applied, we believe, to promote those views in the end. His letters upon *Electricity* have been more extensively circulated than any of his other writings; and are entitled to more praise and popularity than they seem ever to have met with in this country. Nothing can be more admirable than the luminous and graphical precision with which the experiments are narrated; the ingenuity with which they are projected; and the sagacity with which the conclusion is inferred, limited, and confirmed.

The most remarkable thing, however, in these, and indeed in the whole of his physical speculations, is the unparalleled simplicity and facility with which the reader is conducted from one stage of the inquiry to another. The author never appears for a moment to labour, or to be at a loss. The most ingenious and profound explanations are suggested, as if they were the most natural and obvious way of accounting for the phenomena; and the author seems to value himself so little on his most important discoveries, that it is necessary to compare him with others, before we can form a just notion of his merits. As he seems to be conscious of no exertion, he feels no partiality for any part of his speculations, and never seeks to raise the reader's idea of their importance, by any arts of declamation or eloquence. Indeed, the habitual precision of his conceptions, and his invariable practice of referring to specific facts and observations, secured him, in a great measure, both from those extravagant conjectures in which so many naturalists have indulged, and from the zeal and enthusiasm which seems so naturally to be engendered in their defence. He was by no means averse to give scope to his imagination, in suggesting a variety of explanations of obscure and unmanageable phenomena; but he never allowed himself to confound these vague and conjectural theories with the solid results of expe-

rience and observation. In his Meteorological papers, and in his Observations upon Heat and Light, there is a great deal of such bold and original suggestions: but the author evidently sets little value upon them; and has no sooner disburdened his mind of the impressions from which they proceeded, than he seems to dismiss them entirely from his consideration, and turns to the legitimate philosophy of experiment with unabated diligence and humility.

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Our limits will not permit us to make any analysis of the physical papers contained in this collection. They are all admirable for the clearness of the description, the felicity and familiarity of the illustrations, and the singular sagacity of the remarks with which they are interspersed. The theory of whirlwinds and water-spouts, as well as the observations on the course of the winds and on cold, seem to be excellent. The paper called Maritime Observations is full of ingenuity and practical good sense; and the remarks on Evaporation, and on the Tides, most of which are contained in a series of letters to a young lady, are admirable, not merely for their perspicuity, but for the interest and amusement they are calculated to communicate to every description of readers. The remarks on Fire-places and Smoky chimnies are infinitely more original, concise, and scientific, than those of Count Rumford; and the observations on the Gulph-stream afford, we believe, the first example of just theory, and accurate investigation, applied to that phenomenon.

Dr. Franklin, we think, has never made use of the mathematics, in his investigation of the phenomena of nature; and though this may render it surprising that he has fallen into so few errors of importance, we conceive that it helps in some measure to explain the unequalled perspicuity and vivacity of his expositions. An algebraist, who can work wonders with letters, seldom condescends to be much indebted to words, and thinks himself entitled to make his sentences obscure, provided his calculations be distinct. A writer who has nothing but words to make use of, must make all the use he can of them: he cannot afford to neglect the only chance he has of being understood.

We should now say something of the political writings of Dr. Franklin, — the productions which first raised him into public office and eminence, and which will be least read or attended to by posterity. They may be divided into two parts; those which relate to the internal affairs and provincial differences of the American colonies, before their quarrel with the mother country; and those which relate to that quarrel and its consequences. The former are no longer in any degree interesting: and the editor has done wisely, we think, in presenting his readers with an abstract only of the longest of them. This was published in 1759, under the title of an Historical Review of the Constitution of Pennsylvania, and consisted of upwards of 500 pages, composed for the purpose of showing that the political privileges reserved to the founder of the colony had been illegally and oppressively used. The Canada pamphlet, written in 1760, for the purpose of pointing out the importance of retaining that colony at the peace, is given entire; and appears to be composed with great force of reason, and in a style of extraordinary perspicuity. The same may be said of what are called the Albany Papers, or the plan for a general political union of the colonies in 1754; and of a variety of other tracts

on the provincial politics of that day. All these are worth preserving, both as monuments of Dr. Franklin's talents and activity, and as affording, in many places, very excellent models of strong reasoning and popular eloquence: but the interest of the subjects is now completely gone by; and the few specimens of general reasoning which we meet with, serve only to increase our regret, that the talents of the author should have been wasted on such perishable materials.

There is not much written on the subject of the dispute with the colonies; and most of Dr. Franklin's papers on that subject are already well known to the public. His examination before the House of Commons in 1766, affords a striking proof of the extent of his information, the clearness and force of his *extempore* composition, and the steadiness and self-possession which enabled him to display these qualities with so much effect upon such an occasion. His letters before the commencement of hostilities, are full of grief and anxiety; but, no sooner did matters come to extremities, than he appears to have assumed a certain keen and confident cheerfulness, not unmixed with a seasoning of asperity, and more vindictiveness of spirit than perhaps became a philosopher.*

Of the merit of this author as a political economist, we have already had occasion to say something, in the general remarks which we made on the character of his genius; and we cannot now spare time to go much into particulars. He is perfectly sound upon many important and practical points;—upon the corn-trade, and the theory of money, for instance; and also upon the more general doctrines, as to the freedom of commerce, and the principle of population. In the more elementary and abstract parts of the science, however, his views seem to have been less just and luminous. He is not very consistent or profound in what he says of the effects of luxury; and seems to have gone headlong into the radical error of the *Economistes*, when he maintains, that all that is done by manufacture, is to embody the value of the manufacturer's subsistence in his work, and that agriculture is the only source from which a real increase of wealth can be derived. Another favourite position is, that all commerce is *cheating*, where a commodity, produced by a certain quantity of labour, is exchanged for another, on which more labour has been expended; and that the only *fair* price of any thing, is some other thing requiring the same exertion to bring it to market. This is evidently a very narrow and erroneous view of the nature of commerce. The fair price to the purchaser is, whatever he deliberately chooses to give, rather than go without the commodity;—it is no matter to him, whether the seller bestowed much or little labour upon it, or whether it came into his possession without any labour at all;—whether it be a diamond, which he picked up, or a picture, at which he had been working for years. The commodity is not valued by the purchaser, on account of the labour which is supposed to be embodied in it, but solely on account of certain qualities, which he finds convenient or agreeable: he compares the convenience and delight which he expects to derive from this object with the convenience and delight which is afforded by the things

* The Reviewer inserts here several interesting extracts from the letters which passed between Dr. Franklin and Lord Howe, when his Lordship arrived off the American Coast with what were called the pacificatory proposals in 1776.

asked in exchange for it; and if he find the former preponderate, he consents to the exchange, and makes a beneficial bargain. We have stated the case in the name of a purchaser, because, in barter, both parties are truly purchasers, and act upon the same principles; and it is easy to show, that all commerce resolves itself, ultimately, into barter. There can be no unfairness in trade, except where there is concealment on the part of the seller, either of the defects of the commodity, or of the fact that the purchaser may be supplied with it at a cheaper rate by another. It is a matter of *fact*, but not of *morality*, that the price of most commodities will be influenced by the labour employed in producing them.—If they are capable of being produced in unlimited quantities, the competition of the producers will sink the price very nearly to what is necessary to maintain this labour; and the impossibility of continuing the production, without repaying that labour, will prevent it from sinking lower. The doctrine does not apply at all to cases where the materials, or the skill necessary to work them up, are scarce in proportion to the demand. The author's speculations on the effects of paper-money, seem also to be superficial and inaccurate. *Statistics* had not been carefully studied in the days of his activity; and, accordingly, we meet with a good deal of loose assumption, and sweeping calculation, in his writings. Yet he had a genius for exact observation, and complicated detail; and probably wanted nothing but leisure, to have made very great advances in this branch of economy.

As a writer on morality and general literature, the merits of Dr. Franklin cannot be estimated properly, without taking into consideration the peculiarities that have been already alluded to in his early history and situation. He never had the benefit of any academical instruction, nor of the society of men of letters;—his style was formed entirely by his own judgment and occasional reading; and most of his moral pieces were written while he was a tradesman, addressing himself to the tradesmen of his native city. We cannot expect, therefore, either that he should write with extraordinary elegance or grace; or that he should treat of the accomplishments, follies, and occupations of polite life. He had no great occasion, as a moralist, to expose the guilt and the folly of gaming or seduction; or to point a poignant and playful ridicule against the lighter immoralities of fashionable life.

His account of his own life, down to the year 1730, has been in the hands of the public since 1790. It is written with great simplicity and liveliness, though it contains too many trifling details and anecdotes of obscure individuals. It affords a striking example of the irresistible force with which talents and industry bear upwards in society; as well as an impressive illustration of the substantial wisdom and good policy of invariable integrity and candour. We should think it a very useful reading for all young persons of unsteady principle, who have their fortunes to make or to mend in the world.

Upon the whole, we look upon the life and writings of Dr. Franklin as affording a striking illustration of the incalculable value of a sound and well-directed understanding, and of the comparative uselessness of learning and laborious accomplishments. Without the slightest pretensions to the character of a scholar or a man of science, he has extended the bounds of human knowledge on a variety of subjects, which scholars and men of science had previously investigated without

success; and has only been found deficient in those studies which the learned have generally turned from in disdain. We would not be understood to say any thing in disparagement of scholarship and science; but the value of these instruments is apt to be overrated by their possessors; and it is a wholesome mortification, to show them that the work may be done without them. We have long known that their employment does not insure its success.*

BENTHAM.†

MR. BENTHAM is now far advanced in a life which he has generously devoted to the service of his fellow creatures. More than fifty years he has employed in labours, which had no other object than to improve the condition of mankind. According to him, Utility is the foundation of all Morals, and should be the object of all Legislation: Not that attention to the interests of particular individuals at the expense of the general good, — that selfishness, which some moralists affect to understand as meant, by what is useful, — but *general* utility, — an augmentation of the happiness, and a diminution of the misery of the great mass of individuals of which every community is composed.

Never did any philosopher better conform his life to his doctrines, or more happily illustrate his principles by his conduct. He has consumed his days in endeavouring to be useful to others; but, according to the common notions of the world, he has spent them uselessly to himself. Having completed his education at Westminster school, and afterwards at the University of Oxford with much distinction, he was called early to the Bar. His connexions (for he was the son of a very eminent solicitor) must have given him an early introduction to business; and his learning, his extraordinary talents, and his indefatigable application, rendered his success in the profession, if he had continued to follow it, matter of certainty. The first eminence at the Bar, and the opulence which attends it, were at his command; and, if he could have persuaded himself to accommodate his political principles to the wishes of those in power, the most splendid station, and the highest honours, would have been infallibly within his reach. From those brilliant prospects he voluntarily turned away; and after a very few years of practice, he relinquished the profession, shut himself up in the retirement of his study, and devoted himself to the task of legislation. A citizen of the world in its purest sense, he has suffered no opportunity which has presented itself of benefiting his fellow men in any portion of the globe, to pass away without endeavouring to improve it.

To France, at the beginning of the Revolution, when every generous and enlightened mind looked forward with sanguine hopes to the blessings that seemed dawning upon mankind, and when the National Assembly was in possession of means of improving the human condition, such as never before were commanded by any assembly of men

* The Reader is referred to Vol. xxviii. page 275. for further remarks on the character of Franklin.

† Bentham on Codification.—Vol. xxix. page 217. November, 1817.

—to France, at that moment of delusive hope, he made a generous tender of his services. Upon their judicial establishments, upon their colonies, and upon the conduct, or, as he termed it, the tactics of their Assembly, he composed and transmitted to them different tracts, containing new, but at the same time the soundest views of reason and of policy. If the rules for governing the proceedings of their Assembly alone had been adopted, those disorders and calamities which blighted all the fair prospects that were then opening to the view of the nation, and of the rest of Europe, would in all probability have been averted. For Poland, for Russia, for America, he has alike been desirous of exercising his philanthropic labours. With respect to his own country, whenever an occasion has occurred for offering any improvement of its laws or its policy, he has eagerly availed himself of it. Upon the statutes of usury; upon the taxes imposed on law proceedings; upon the reform projected in the judicial establishments of Scotland; upon penal labour, and upon the evils and abuses of that system of penal colonization which has been adopted in the place of it;—upon all these important topics, he has given to the public his enlarged and enlightened views. And he has laboured for all nations, and for ages yet to come, in his greater works,—his ‘Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation;’ his ‘Treatise on Civil and Penal Legislation;’ his ‘Theory of Punishments and Rewards;’ and his ‘Essay on the Tactics of Political Assemblies.’

The beneficial effects which might have been expected from these masterly compositions, have not, it is true, as yet been produced. We are not able to discover the traces of these works in the improved condition of any portion of the human race. The noblest reward which, in this our mortal state, any human being can receive—that of contemplating the happiness of which he is himself the author, the scattering plenty o’er a smiling land, and reading his history in a nation’s eyes—this reward it has not been his good fortune to obtain: but, let it not be imagined that his merits have been wholly unrequited, and that he has spent his excellent life only in ungrateful toil and cheerless disappointment. From several passages dispersed in different parts of his writings, it is evident that he is not unconscious of his own extraordinary powers; that the truth, so manifest to others, is no secret to himself,—but that he is fully convinced, that, sooner or later, the time must come, when his merits will be justly appreciated, and the high importance of his services acknowledged; that in after times, his principles will be generally adopted; and that, if not to his contemporaries, yet to remote ages, and to yet uncivilized nations, he will be a Teacher and a Legislator. This alone it is—this anticipation of future fame, and of an assured immortality—this certainty that the seeds now sown will infallibly bring forth, though a late, yet an ample harvest of human happiness, which can have induced him, under every discouragement, and with nothing but a sanguine confidence in the truth and importance of his principles to cheer him, for so long a series of years, to persevere in devoting his whole time to this one pursuit, and in sacrificing to it fortune, pleasure, and all the dazzling prizes that ambition could hold out;—in giving up every meaner enjoyment for the sublime gratification of becoming a great benefactor to mankind.

The duty of impartial criticism would be ill discharged, if, after

having spoken as we have of Mr. Bentham's extraordinary merit, we were to say nothing of his defects. We are fully sensible of them; and we have observed them with deep regret; for we can regard in no other light than that of a public misfortune whatever prevents his writings from being known, and their utility and importance from being universally acknowledged. What principally obstructs their circulation, is the style in which they are composed. Unlike most authors, Mr. Bentham's first publications are, in point of writing, the most perfect; and long habit and frequent exercise, instead of improving his language, seem only to have rendered it perplexed, obscure and uncouth. English literature hardly affords any specimens of a more correct, concise, and perspicuous style, than that of the '*Fragment on Government*,' which was the first of Mr. Bentham's works, or the '*Protest against Law Taxes*,' and a great part of the '*Defence of Usury*,' which were early productions of his mind. Since those publications, he seems, by great effort and study, to have rendered his style intricate, and his language obscure. His frequent inversions, his long parentheses, the novelty and harshness of many of the terms which he has so often, and, we must say, on many occasions, so unnecessarily invented, and the length and complication of his periods, have rendered some of his compositions illegible to all who will not, in spite of their repulsive forms, persevere in the difficult task of studying rather than reading them. It is indeed when he speaks by another's lips, that he appears to most advantage; and it is to the graces of style which Mr. Dumont has given him, that he owes the reputation which he has acquired, and which is, from that cause, much greater in foreign countries than in his own. Notwithstanding, however, all the untoward circumstances which have prevented the genius of Bentham from being justly appreciated by his contemporaries, it must be accounted an instance of rare good fortune, that such a man as Dumont became his acquaintance and his friend. If it very seldom happens, that, to such extraordinary talents as Bentham possesses, is united an ardent desire to devote them totally and exclusively to the service of mankind; it is no less uncommon to find a writer possessed of the eloquence, the powers of development, and the perspicuity and vigour of expression which so eminently distinguish Dumont, contented, instead of applying his great endowments to some original work which might immortalize himself, to submit, from no other motive than that of benefiting his fellow-creatures, to the humble office of setting forth another's ideas to advantage, and of advancing another's fame. As the merit of the greatest philosopher of antiquity would have been little known to posterity but for the sublime writings of his eloquent disciple, so it is possible that, but for Dumont, Bentham's reputation might never have emerged from obscurity.

It is not, however, to Mr. Bentham's style alone that we find reason to object. Nothing, in our opinion, can be more injudicious than the manner in which he has, in his various writings, combated existing evils. It has been truly said, that we always weaken our attack when we exaggerate the abuse attacked. This, Mr. Bentham appears to us almost always to do; and when we observe the language in which he inveighs against the supposed frauds of lawyers, the corruption of boroughmongers, and the imputed profligacy of public men of all parties, we blush to find some features of resemblance between one of

the first philosophers of the age, and that unhappy class of literary persons, whom necessity impels, or the capricious appetite of the public invites to exaggerate, and misrepresent, and calumniate, in pursuit of a subsistence at once discreditable and precarious.*

SWIFT.†

THE transition of a young Whig into an old Tory—the gradual falling off of prudent men from unprofitable virtues, is, perhaps, too common an occurrence to deserve much notice, or justify much reprobation. But Swift's desertion of his first principles was neither gradual nor early,—and was accompanied by such circumstances as really require to be exposed a little, and cannot well be passed over in a fair account of his life and character. He was bred a Whig under Sir William Temple—he took the title publicly in various productions; and, during all the reign of King William, was a strenuous, and indeed an intolerant advocate of Revolution principles and Whig pretensions. His first patrons were Somers, Portland and Halifax; and under that ministry, the members of which he courted in private, and defended in public, he received church preferment to the value of near 400*l.* a year (equal at least to 1200*l.* at present), with the promise of still farther favours. He was dissatisfied, however, because his livings were not in England; and having been sent over on the affairs of the Irish clergy in 1710, when he found the Whig ministry in a tottering condition, he temporized for a few months, till he saw that their downfall was inevitable; and then, without even the pretext of any public motive, but on the avowed ground of not having been sufficiently rewarded for his former services, he went over in the most violent and decided manner to the prevailing party; for whose gratification he abused his former friends and benefactors, with a degree of virulence and rancour, to which it would not be too much to apply the term of brutality: and in the end, when the approaching death of the Queen, and their internal dissensions, made his services of more importance to his new friends, openly threatened to desert them also, and retire from the scene, unless they made a suitable provision for him; and having, in this way, extorted the deanery of St. Patrick's, which he always complained of as quite inadequate to his merits, he counselled measures that must have involved the country in a civil war, for the mere chance of keeping his party in power; and, finally, on the Queen's death, retired in a state of despicable despondency and bitterness to his living, where he continued, to the end of his life, to libel liberty and mankind with unrelenting and pitiable rancour—to correspond with convicted traitors to the constitution they had sworn to maintain—and to lament as the worst of calamities, the dissolution of a ministry which had no merit but that of having promised him advancement, and of which several of the leading members immediately indemnified themselves by taking office in the court of the Pretender.

* The admirable article on *Codification*, to which these observations on the character of Mr. Bentham form the introduction, will be found under the division of this work containing Essays on "Law and Jurisprudence."

† Sketch of his Political Character. Scott's Life of Swift.—Vol. xxvii. page 10. September, 1816.

As this part of his conduct is passed over a great deal too slightly by his biographer; and as nothing can be more pernicious than the notion, that the political sins of eminent persons should be forgotten in the estimate of their merits, we must beg leave to verify the comprehensive sketch we have now given, by a few references to the documents that are to be found in the volumes before us. Of his original Whig professions, no proof will probably be required, the fact being notorious, and admitted by all his biographers. Abundant evidence, however, is furnished by his first successful pamphlet in defence of Lord Somers, and the other Whig Lords impeached in 1701;—by his own express declaration in another work (vol. iii. p. 240.), that ‘having been long conversant with the Greek and Latin authors, and therefore a lover of liberty, he was naturally inclined to be what they call a Whig in politics;’—by the copy of verses in which he deliberately designates himself ‘a Whig, and one who wears a gown;’—by his exulting statement to Tisdal, whom he reproaches with being a Tory, and says—‘To cool your insolence a little, know that the Queen, and Court, and House of Lords, and half the Commons almost, are Whigs, and the number daily increases:’—and, among innumerable other proofs, by the memorable verses on Whitehall, in which, alluding to the execution of King Charles in front of that building, he is pleased to say, with more zeal than good prosody,

‘ That theatre produced an action truly great,
On which eternal acclamations wait,’ &c.

Such being the principles, by the zealous profession of which he had first obtained distinction and preferment, and been admitted to the friendship of such men as Somers, Addison, and Steele, it only remains to be seen on what occasion, and on what considerations, he afterwards renounced them. It is, of itself, a tolerably decisive fact, that this change took place just when the Whig ministry went out of power, and their adversaries came into full possession of all the patronage and interest of the government. The whole matter, however, is fairly spoken out in various parts of his own writings:—and we do not believe there is anywhere on record a more barefaced avowal of political apostasy, undisguised and unpalliated by the slightest colour or pretence of public or conscientious motives. It is quite a singular fact, we believe, in the history of this sort of conversion, that he nowhere pretends to say that he had become aware of any danger to the country from the continuance of the Whig ministry—nor ever presumes to call in question the patriotism or penetration of Addison and the rest of his former associates, who remained faithful to their first professions. His only apology, in short, for this sudden dereliction of the principles which he had maintained for near forty years—for it was at this ripe age that he got the first glimpse of his youthful folly—is a pretence of ill usage from the party with whom he had held them; a pretence—to say nothing of its inherent baseness—which appears to be utterly without foundation, and of which it is enough to say, that no mention is made, till that same party is overthrown. While they remain in office, they have full credit for the sincerity of their good wishes (see vol. xv. p. 250, &c.):—and it is not, till it becomes both safe and profitable to abuse them, that we hear of their ingratitude. Nay, so critically and judiciously timed is this discovery of their unworthiness, that, even after the worthy author’s

arrival in London in 1710, when the movements had begun which terminated in their ruin, he continues, for some months, to keep on fair terms with them, and does not give way to his well-considered resentment, till it is quite apparent that his interest must gain by the indulgence. He says, in the *Journal to Stella*, a few days after his arrival, ‘The Whigs would gladly lay hold on me, as a twig, while they are drowning,—and their great men are making me their clumsy apologies. But my Lord Treasurer (Godolphin) received me with a great deal of coldness, which has enraged me so, that I am almost vowing revenge.’ In a few weeks after—the change being by that time complete—he takes his part definitively, and makes his approaches to Harley, in a manner which we should really imagine no *rat* of the present day could have confidence enough to imitate. In mentioning his first interview with that eminent person, he says, ‘I had prepared him before by another hand, where he was very intimate, and *got myself represented* (which I might justly do) *as one extremely ill used by the last ministry*, after some obligation, because I refused to go certain lengths they would have me.’ (Vol. xv. p. 350.) About the same period, he gives us farther lights into the conduct of this memorable conversion, in the following passages of the *Journal*.

‘Oct. 7. He (Harley) told me he must bring Mr. St. John and me acquainted; and spoke so many things of personal kindness and esteem, that I am inclined to believe what some friends had told me, that he would do every thing *to bring me over*. He desired me to dine with him on Tuesday; and, after four hours being with him, set me down at St. James’s coffee-house in a hackney-coach.

‘I must tell you a great piece of refinement in Harley. He charged me to come and see him often; I told him I was loath to trouble him, in so much business as he had, and desired I might have leave to come at his levee; which he immediately refused, and said, ‘That was no place for friends.’

‘I believe never was any thing compassed so soon: and purely done by my personal credit with Mr. Harley; who *is so excessively obliging, that I know not what to make of it, unless to show the rascals of the other party, that they used a man unworthily who had deserved better*. He speaks all the kind things to me in the world.—Oct. 14. I stand with the new people ten times better than ever I did with the old, and forty times more caressed.’ *Life*, Vol. i. p. 126.

‘Nov. 8. Why should the Whigs think I came to England to leave them? But who the devil cares what they think? Am I under obligations in the least to any of them all? Rot them, ungrateful dogs. I will make them repent their usage of me, before I leave this place. They say the same thing here *of my leaving the Whigs; but they own they cannot blame me, considering the treatment I have had,*’ &c. &c.

If he scrupled about going lengths with his Whig friends, he seems to have resolved, that his fortune should not be hurt by any delicacy of this sort in his new connexion;—for he took up the cudgels this time with the ferocity of a hireling, and the rancour of a renegade. In taking upon himself the conduct of the paper called ‘*The Examiner*,’ he gave a new character of acrimony and bitterness to the contention in which he mingled,—and not only made the most furious and unmeasured attacks upon the body of the party to which it had

formerly been his boast that he belonged, but singled out, with a sort of savage discourtesy, a variety of his former friends and benefactors, and made them, by name and description, the objects of the most malignant abuse. Lord Somers, Godolphin, Steele, and many others with whom he had formerly lived in intimacy, and from whom he had received obligations, were successively attacked in public with the most rancorous personalities, and often with the falsest insinuations: in short, as he has himself emphatically expressed it in the *Journal*, he ‘libelled them all round.’ While he was thus abusing men he could not have ceased to esteem, it is quite natural, and in course, to find him professing the greatest affection for those he hated and despised. A thorough partisan is a thorough despiser of sincerity; and no man seems to have got over that weakness more completely than the reverend person before us. In every page of the *Journal* to *Stella*, we find a triumphant statement of things he was writing or saying to the people about him, in direct contradiction to his real sentiments. We may quote a line or two from the first passage that presents itself. ‘I desired my Lord Radnor’s brother to let my Lord know I would call on him at six, which I did; and was arguing with him three hours to bring him over to us; and I spoke so closely, that I believe he will be tractable. But he is a scoundrel; *and though I said I only talked from my love to him, I told a lie; for I did not care if he were hanged: but every one gained over is of consequence.*’—Vol. iii. p. 2. We think there are not many even of those who have served a regular apprenticeship to corruption and jobbing, who could go through their base task with more coolness and hardihood than this pious neophyte.

These few references are, of themselves, sufficient to show the spirit and the true motives of this dereliction of his first principles; and seem entirely to exclude the only apology which the partiality of his biographer has been able to suggest, viz. that though, from first to last, a Whig in politics, he was all along still more zealously a High-Churchman as to religion; and left the Whigs merely because the Tories seemed more favourable to ecclesiastical pretensions. It is obvious, however, that this is quite inadmissible. The Whigs were as notoriously connected with the Low-Church party when he joined and defended them, as when he deserted and reviled them;—nor is this anywhere made the specific ground of his revilings. It would not have been very easy, indeed, to have asserted such a principle as the motive of his libels on the Earl of Nottingham, who, though a Whig, was a zealous High-Churchman, or his eulogies on Bolingbroke, who was pretty well known to be no churchman at all. It appears pretty plain, indeed, that Swift’s High-Church principles were merely a part of his selfishness and ambition, and meant nothing else than a desire to raise the consequence of the order to which he happened to belong. If he had been a layman, we have no doubt he would have treated the pretensions of the priesthood, as he treated the persons of all priests who were opposed to him, with the most bitter and irreverent disdain. Accordingly, he is so far from ever recommending Whig principles of government to his High-Church friends, or from confining his abuse of the Whigs to their tenets in matters ecclesiastical, that he goes the whole length of proscribing the party, and proposing, with the desperation of a true apostate, that the Monarch should be made substantially absolute by the assistance of a military force, in order to make it

impossible that their principles should ever again acquire any preponderance in the country. It is impossible, we conceive, to give any other meaning to the advice contained in his ‘Free Thoughts on the State of Affairs,’ which he wrote just before the Queen’s death, and which Bolingbroke himself thought too strong for publication even at that critical period. His leading injunction there, is to adopt a system of the most rigorous exclusion of all Whigs from any kind of employment; and that, as they cannot be too much or too soon disabled, they ought to be proceeded against with as strong measures as can possibly consist with the lenity of our government; so that in no time to come it should be in the power of the Crown, even if it wished it, to choose an ill majority in the House of Commons. This great work, he adds very explicitly, could only be well carried on by an entire new modelling of *the army*, and especially of the royal guards, which, as they then stood, he chooses to allege were fitter to guard a prince to the bar of a high court of justice, than to secure him on the throne (vol. v. p. 404). This, Mr. Scott himself is so little able to reconcile with the alleged Whig principles of his author, that he is forced to observe upon it, that it is ‘daring uncompromising counsel, better suited to the genius of the man who gave it, than to that of the British nation, and most likely, if followed, to have led to a civil war.’ After this admission, it really is not very easy to understand by what singular stretch of charity the learned editor conceives he may consistently hold, that Swift was always a good Revolution Whig as to politics, and only sided with the Tories — reluctantly, we must suppose, and with great tenderness to his political opponents — out of his overpowering zeal for the Church.

While he thus stooped to the dirtiest and most dishonourable part of a partisan’s drudgery, it was not to be expected that he should decline any of the mean arts by which a Court party may be maintained. Accordingly, we find him regular in his attendance upon Mrs. Masham, the Queen’s favourite; and, after reading the contemptuous notices that occur of her in some of his Whig letters, as ‘one of the Queen’s dressers, who, by great intrigue and flattery, had gained an ascendant over her,’ it is very edifying to find him writing periodical accounts of the progress of her pregnancy, and ‘praying God to preserve her life, which is of great importance to this nation,’ &c. &c.

A connexion thus begun upon an avowed dissatisfaction with the reward of former services, cannot, with consistency, be supposed to have had any thing but self-interest as its foundation: and though Swift’s love of power, and especially of the power of wounding, was probably gratified by his exertions in behalf of the triumphant party, no room is left for doubting that these exertions were substantially prompted by a desire to better his own fortune, and that his opinion of the merits of the party depended entirely upon their power and apparent inclination to perform this first of all duties. The thing is spoken out continually in the confidential Journal to Stella; and though he was very angry with Harley for offering him a bank note for fifty pounds, and refused to be his chaplain, this was very plainly because he considered these as no sufficient pay for his services — by no means because he wished them to be received without pay. Very soon after his profession of Toryism, he writes to Stella — ‘This is the last sally I shall ever make; but *I hope it will turn to some account*. I have done more for these, and I think they are more honest than the last.’

And a little after — ‘ My new friends are very kind ; and I have promised enough. To return without some mark of distinction, would look extremely little ; and I *would likewise gladly be somewhat richer than I am.*’ At last, he seems to have fairly asked for the see of Hereford (vol. xvi. p. 45.) ; and when this is refused, he says, ‘ I dined with Lord Treasurer, who chid me for being absent three days. Mighty kind with a p— ! Less of civility, and more of interest !’ At last, when the state of the Queen’s health made the duration of the ministry extremely precarious, and the support of their friends more essential, he speaks out like a true Swiss, and tells them that he will run away and leave them, if they do not instantly make a provision for him. In the Journal to Stella, he writes, that having seen the warrants for three deaneries, and none of them for him, he had gone to the Lord Treasurer, and ‘ told him I had nothing to do but to go back to Ireland immediately ; for I could not, with any reputation stay longer here, *unless I had something honourable immediately given to me.* He afterwards told me he had stopped the warrants, and hoped something might be compassed for me,’ &c. And in the page following we find, that all his love for his dear friend the Lord Treasurer, would not induce him ever to see him again, if he was disappointed in this object of ambition. ‘ The warrants for the deaneries are still stopped, for fear I should be gone. Do you think any thing will be done ? In the mean time, I prepare for my journey, and see no great people ; — *nor will I see Lord Treasurer any more, if I go.*’ (Vol. iii. p. 207.) It is under this threat that he extorts the Deanery of St. Patrick’s,— which he accepts with much grumbling and discontent, and does not enter into possession till all hope of further preferment seems for the time at an end. In this extremity he seems resolved, however, to make the most of it ; and finding that the expenses of his induction and the usual payments to government on the occasion come to a considerable sum, he boldly resolves to ask a thousand pounds from the ministers, on the score of his past services, in order to make himself easy. This he announces to Stella soon after the appointment. ‘ I hope in time they will be persuaded *to give me some money* to clear off these debts. They expect I shall pass the next winter here ; and *then I will drive them to give me a sum of money.*’ And a little after — ‘ I shall be sadly cramped, unless the Queen will give me a thousand pounds. I am sure she owes me a great deal more. Lord Treasurer rallies me upon it, and, I am sure, intends it — but *quando ?*’ And again — ‘ Lord Treasurer uses me barbarously. He laughs when I mention a thousand pounds — though a thousand pounds is a very serious thing.’ It appears, however, that this modest request never was complied with ; for, though Bolingbroke got the Queen’s warrant for it, to secure Swift’s attachment after he had turned out Harley, yet her Majesty’s immediate death rendered the gift unavailing.

If any thing were wanting to show that his change of party and his attachment to that which was now uppermost, was wholly founded on personal, and in no degree on public considerations, it would be supplied by the innumerable traits of personal vanity, and the unrestrained expressions of eulogy or abuse, according as that vanity was gratified or thwarted, that are scattered over the whole Journal and Correspondence,— and which are utterly irreconcilable with the conduct of a man who was acting on any principle of dignity or fairness. With all his talent and all his pride, indeed, it appears that

Swift exhibited, during this period of favour, as much of the ridiculous airs of a *parvenu* — of a low-bred underling brought suddenly into contact with wealth and splendour, as any of the base understrappers that ever made party disgusting. The studied rudeness and ostentatious arrogance with which he withheld the usual tribute of respect that all well-bred persons pay to rank and office, may be reckoned among the signs of this. But for a fuller picture, we would refer to the Diary of Bishop Kennet, who thus describes the demeanour of this politic partisan in the year 1713.

‘ Dr. Swift came into the coffeehouse, and had a bow from every body but me. When I came to the antichamber to wait before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and business, and acted as a master of requests. He was soliciting the Earl of Arran to speak to his brother the Duke of Ormond, to get a chaplain’s place established in the garrison of Hull for Mr. Fiddes, a clergyman in that neighbourhood, who had lately been in jail, and published sermons to pay fees. He was promising Mr. Thorold to undertake with my Lord-Treasurer, that, according to his petition, he should obtain a salary of 200*l. per annum*, as minister of the English church at Rotterdam. He stopped F. Gwynne, Esq., going in with the red bag to the Queen, and told him aloud he had something to say to him from my Lord-Treasurer. He talked with the son of Dr. Davenant to be sent abroad, and took out his pocket-book, and wrote down several things, as *memoranda*, to do for him. He turned to the fire, and took out his gold watch, and telling the time of the day, complained it was very late. A gentleman said, “ he was too fast.” — “ How can I help it,” says the Doctor, “ if the courtiers give me a watch that won’t go right ?” Then he instructed a young nobleman, that the best poet in England was Mr. Pope (a Papist), who had begun a translation of Homer into English verse, for which “ he must have them all subscribe ;” — “ for,” says he, “ the author *shall not* begin to print till *I have* a thousand guineas for him.” Lord-Treasurer, after leaving the Queen, came through the room, beckoning Dr. Swift to follow him ; both went off *just before prayers.* *Life*, Vol. i. p. 139, 140.

We are very unwilling, in any case, to ascribe to unworthy motives, what may be sufficiently accounted for upon better considerations ; but we really have not charity enough to impute Swift’s zealous efforts to prevent the rupture between Harley and Bolingbroke, or his continued friendship with both after that rupture took place, to his personal and disinterested affection for these two individuals. In the first place, he had a most manifest interest to prevent their disunion, as that which plainly tended to the entire dissolution of the ministry, and the ruin of the party on which he depended ; and, as to his remaining the friend of both after they had become the most rancorous enemies of each other, it must be remembered that they were still respectively the two most eminent individuals with whom he had been connected : and that, if ever that party should be restored to power, from which alone he could now look for preferment, he who stood well with *both* these statesmen would have a double chance of success. Considering, indeed, the facility with which he seems to have cast off friendships far more intimate than the inequality of their condition renders it possible that those of Oxford or Bolingbroke could be with him, whenever party interest interfered with them ; — considering the disrespect with which

he spoke of Sir William Temple's memory, after he had abjured his principles ;— the coarseness with which he calls Lord Somers ' a false ' deceitful rascal,' after having designated him as the modern Aristides, for his blameless integrity ;— and the unfeeling rancour with which he exposes the personal failings and pecuniary embarrassments of Steele, with whom he had been long so closely united ;— it would seem to require something more than the mere personal attachment of a needy pamphleteer to two rival peers, to account for his expressions of affection for both, after one had supplanted the other. The natural solution, indeed, seems to lie sufficiently open.— After the perfidy he had shown to the Whig party, and the virulence with which he had revenged his own apostasy, there was no possibility of his being again received by them. His only chance, therefore, was in the restoration of the Tories, and his only policy to keep well with both their great leaders.

Mr. Scott, indeed, chuses to represent him as actuated by a romantic attachment to Lord Oxford, and pronounces an eloquent encomium on his devoted generosity for applying for leave of absence, upon that Nobleman's disgrace, in order to be able to visit him in his retirement. Though he talks of such a visit, however, it is certain that he did not pay it ; and that he was all the time engaged in the most friendly correspondence with Bolingbroke, from whom, the very day after he had kicked out his dear friend with the most undisguised anger and contempt, he condescended to receive an order for the thousand pounds he had so long solicited from his predecessor in vain. The following, too, are the terms in which Bolingbroke, at that very time, thought there was no impropriety, and could be no offence, in writing of Oxford, in a private confidential letter to this his dear devoted friend. ' Your ' state of late passages is right enough. I reflect upon them with ' indignation ; and shall never forgive myself for having trusted so long ' to so much real pride and awkward humility ;— to an air of such ' familiar friendship, and a heart so void of all tenderness ;— to such a ' temper of engrossing business and power, and so perfect an incapacity to manage one, with such a tyrannical disposition to abuse ' the other,' &c. &c. (Vol. xvi. p. 219.) If Swift's feelings for Oxford had borne any resemblance to those which Mr. Scott has imputed to him, it is not conceivable that he should have continued upon a footing of the greatest cordiality with the man who, after supplanting him, could speak in those terms of his fallen rival. Yet Swift's friendship, as they called it, with Bolingbroke, continued as long as that with Oxford ; and we find him not only giving him his advice how to act in the government which had now fallen entirely into his hands, but kindly offering, ' if his own services may be of any use, to attend him by the ' beginning of winter.' (Id. p. 215.) Those who know of what stuff political friendships are generally made, indeed, will not require even this evidence to prove the hollowness of those in which Swift was now connected. The following passage, in a letter from Lewis, the most intimate and confidential of all his coadjutors, dated only a week or two before Oxford's disgrace, gives a delicious picture, we think, of the whole of those persons for whom the learned Dean was thus professing the most disinterested attachment, and receiving, no doubt, in return, professions not less animated and sincere. It is addressed to Swift in July 1714.

' I meet with no man or woman, who pretend upon any probable ' grounds to judge who will carry the great point. Our female friend

‘ (Mrs. Masham) told the dragon (Lord Oxford) in her own house, last
 ‘ Thursday morning, these words : “ You never did the Queen any ser-
 ‘ vice, nor are you capable of doing her any.” He made no reply, *but*
 ‘ *supped with her and Mercurialis* (Bolingbroke) *that night at her own*
 ‘ *house.*—His *revenge is not the less meditated for that.* He tells the
 ‘ words clearly and distinctly to all mankind. *Those who range under*
 ‘ *his banner, cull her ten thousand bitches and kitchen wenches. Those who*
 ‘ *hate him do the same.* And from my heart, I grieve that she should
 ‘ give such a loose to her passion ; for she is susceptible of true friend-
 ‘ ship, and has many social and domestic virtues. The great attorney
 ‘ (Lord Chancellor Harcourt), who made you the sham offer of the
 ‘ Yorkshire living, had a long conference with the dragon on Thursday,
 ‘ *kissed him at parting, and cursed him at night!*’ xvi. p. 173, 174.

The death of Queen Anne, however, which happened on the 1st of August thereafter, speedily composed all those dissensions, and confounded the victors and the vanquished in one common proscription. Among the most miserable and downcast of all the mourners on that occasion, we confess we were somewhat surprised to find our reverend author. He who, but a few months before, was willing to have hazarded all the horrors of a civil war, for the chance of keeping his party in office, sunk instantly into pitiable and unmanly despondency upon the final disgrace of that party. We are unwilling to believe, and we do not in fact believe, that Swift was privy to the designs of Bolingbroke, Ormond, and Mar, to bring in the Pretender on the Queen’s demise, and are even disposed to hold it doubtful whether Oxford concurred in those measures ; but we are sure that no man of common firmness could have felt more sorrow and despair, if the country had been conquered by a lawless invader, than this friend of the Act of Settlement did upon the quiet and regular transmission of the sceptre to the appointed heir, and the discomfiture of those ministers who are proved to have traitorously conspired to accomplish a counter revolution, and restore a dynasty which he always affected to consider as justly rejected. How all this sorrow is to be reconciled to the character of a good Revolution Whig, we leave it to the learned editor, who has invested him with that character, to discover. To us it merely affords new evidence of the selfishness and ambition of the individual, and of that utter and almost avowed disregard of the public, which constituted his political character. Of the sorrow and despondency itself, we need produce no proofs,—for they are to be found in every page of his subsequent writings. His whole life, indeed, after this event, was one long fit of spleen and lamentation : and, to the very end of his days, he never ceases bewailing the irreparable and grievous calamity which the world had suffered in the death of that most imbecile princess. He speaks of it, in short, throughout, as a pious divine might be supposed to speak of the fall of primeval man from the state of innocence. The sun seems darkened for ever in his eyes, and mankind to be degenerated beyond the toleration of one who was cursed with the remembrance of their former dignity ! And all this for what ?—because the government was, with the full assent of the nation, restored to the hands of those whose talents and integrity he had once been proud to celebrate—or rather, because it was taken from those who would have attempted, at the evident risk of a civil war, to defeat that solemn settlement of which *he* had always approved, and in virtue of which alone the late Sovereign had succeeded ;—because the liberties of the

nation were again to be secured in peace, under the same councils which had carried its glories so high in war — and the true friends of the Revolution of 1688 to succeed to that patronage which had previously been exercised by its virtual enemies! Such were the public calamities which he had to lament as a patriot; — and the violence done to his political attachments seems to have been of the same character. His two friends were Bolingbroke and Oxford: and both these had been abusing each other, and endeavouring to supplant each other, with all their might, for a long period of time; — and, at last, one of them did this good office to the other, in the most insulting and malignant manner he could devise: And yet the worthy Dean had charity enough to love them both just as dearly as ever. He was always a zealous advocate, too, for the Act of Settlement; and has in twenty places expressed his abomination of all who could allow themselves to think of the guilt of calling in the Pretender. If, therefore, he could love and honour and flatter Bolingbroke, who not only turned out his beloved Oxford, but actually went over to the Pretender, it is not easy to see why he should have been so implacable towards those older friends of his, who only turned out Bolingbroke, in order to prevent the Pretender from being brought in. On public grounds, in short, there is nothing to be said for him; — nor can his conduct or feelings ever receive any explanation upon such principles. But every thing becomes plain and consistent when we look to another quarter — when we consider, that by the extinction of the Tory party, his hopes of preferment were also extinguished, and that he was no longer to enjoy the dearer delight of bustling in the front of a triumphant party — of inhaling the incense of adulation from its servile dependants — and of insulting with impunity the principles and the benefactors he had himself deserted.

That this was the true key to his feelings, on this and on every other occasion, may be concluded indeed with safety, not only from his former, but from his after life. His Irish politics may all be referred to one principle — a desire to insult and embarrass the government by which he was neglected, and with which he despaired of being reconciled: — A single fact is decisive upon this point. While his friends were in power, we hear nothing of the grievances of Ireland; and to the last we hear nothing of its radical grievance, the oppression of its Catholic population. His object was, not to do good to Ireland, but to vex and annoy the English ministry. To do this however with effect, it was necessary that he should speak to the interests and the feelings of some party who possessed a certain degree of power and influence. This unfortunately was not the case in that day with the Catholics; and though this gave them only a stronger title to the services of a truly brave or generous advocate, it was sufficient to silence Swift. They are not so much as named above two or three times in his writings — and then only with scorn and reprobation. In the topics which he does take up, it is no doubt true, that he frequently inveighs against real oppressions and acts of indisputable impolicy; yet it is no want of charity to say, that it is quite manifest that this was not his motive for bringing them forward, and that he had just as little scruple to make an outcry, where no public interest was concerned, as where it was apparent. It was sufficient for him, that the subject was likely to excite popular prejudice and clamour, — or that he had some personal pique or animosity to gratify. The Drapier's Letters are a sufficient

proof of the influence of the former principle; and the Legion Club, and the numberless brutalities against Tighe and Bettesworth, of the latter. Every body is now satisfied of the perfect harmlessness, and indeed of the great utility of Wood's scheme for a new copper coinage; and the only pretexts for the other scurrilities to which we have alluded were, that the Parliament had shown a disposition to interfere for the alleviation, in some inconsiderable particulars, of the intolerable oppression of the tithe system,—to the detriment, as Swift imagined, of the order to which he himself belonged; and that Mr. Tighe had obtained for a friend of his own, a living which Swift had wished to secure for one of his dependants.

His main object in all this, we make no doubt, was personal pique and vengeance;—yet it is probable, that there was occasionally, or throughout, an expectation of being again brought into the paths of power and preferment, by the notoriety which these publications enabled him to maintain, and by the motives which they held out to each successive ministry, to secure so efficient a pen in their favour. That he was willing to have made his peace with Walpole, even during the reign of George I., is admitted by Mr. Scott,—though he discredits the details which Lord Chesterfield and others have given, apparently from very direct authority, of the humiliating terms upon which he was willing to accede to the alliance:—and it is certain, that he paid his court most assiduously to the successor of that Prince, both while he was Prince of Wales, and after his accession to the throne. The manner in which he paid his court, too, was truly debasing, and especially unworthy of a High-Churchman and a public satirist. It was chiefly by flatteries and assiduity to his mistress, Mrs. Howard, with whom he maintained a close correspondence, and upon whom he always professed mainly to rely for advancement. When George I. died, Swift was among the first to kiss the hands of the new Sovereign, and indulged anew in the golden dreams of preferment. Walpole's recall to power, however, soon overcast those visions; and he then wrote to the mistress, humbly and earnestly entreating her, to tell him sincerely what were his chances of success. She flattered him for a while with hopes; but at last he discovered that the prejudice against him was too strong to be overcome, and ran back in terrible humour to Ireland, where he railed ever after with his usual vehemence against the King, the Queen, and the favourite. The truth, it seems, was, that the latter was disposed to favour him, but that her influence with the King was subordinate to that of the Queen, who made it a principle to thwart all applications which were made through that channel.

Such, we think, is a faithful sketch of the political career of this celebrated person;—and if it be correct in the main, or even in any material particulars, we humbly conceive that a more unprincipled and base course of proceeding never was held up to the contempt and abhorrence of mankind. To the errors and even the inconsistencies of honest minds, we hope we shall always be sufficiently indulgent, and especially to such errors in practical life as are incident to literary and ingenious men. For Swift, however, there is no such apology. His profession, through life, was much more that of a politician than of a clergyman or an author. He was not led away in any degree by heated fancy, or partial affection — by deluding visions of impossible improvements, or excessive indignation at incurable vices. He followed, from first to last, the eager, but steady impulse of personal ambition and

personal animosity; and in the dirty and devious career into which they impelled him, he never spared the character or the feelings of a single individual who appeared to stand in his way. In no respect, therefore, can he have any claim to lenity;—and now, when his faults are of importance only as they may serve the purpose of warning or misleading to others, we consider it as our indispensable duty to point them out in their true colours, and to show that, even when united to talents as distinguished as his, political profligacy and political rancour must lead to universal distrust and avoidance during the life of the individual, and to contempt and infamy thereafter.*

PITT.†

WE are not sufficiently removed by time from the extraordinary person whose life forms the subject of this work, to attempt an estimate of his merits with any great confidence in its impartiality. The scenes in which he acted so conspicuous a part are indeed fast vanishing from the view,—thrown by others into the shade, rather than obscured by distance: But many still remain who profess to be his successors, and who were, in some respects, his associates, though in very humble characters. Their claims to notice, they are well aware, rest entirely on their connexion with him; and they have accordingly used his name as a rallying point to collect men who have no principles in common, nor any bond of union—except inherent similarity of pursuit, and the accidental circumstance, of having once served together under him. It becomes difficult, therefore, to speak of Mr. Pitt without a reference to the policy and the politicians of the present day; and, even if we shall succeed in estimating his claims to the gratitude of the country with perfect freedom from any bias, it is very certain that no party will give us credit for such impartiality. The circumstances which make it so hard for the writer to be unprejudiced, render it quite impossible that he should find a generation of candid readers; and he is far more likely to displease all classes, than to satisfy any. With this deep sense of the difficulties of the task we have undertaken, we should probably have been tempted to abandon it as hopeless, were there not some encouragement in the reflection, that aftertimes may be aided in forming their more calm judgment, even by the conflict of opposite doctrines in the present day; when, if placed too near the subject for correctness of opinions, we are certainly better situated for accurate knowledge of the facts.

In entering upon this most debatable subject, we are naturally anxious to find, if possible, some point from which debate may be excluded—some axiom—or at least some scarcely deniable postulate on which to build our conclusions: And this, it appears, will be found,

* The Reviewer proceeds to delineate Swift's private character, supporting his opinions by quotations from the Dean's letters. This part of the Criticism, though exceedingly interesting, I have omitted, in consequence of its extreme length. See Pages of the E. Review, No. 53. from 26 to 44.

† Tomline's Life of William Pitt.—Vol. xxxv. page 437. July, 1821.

if at all, rather in contrasting Mr. Pitt's different merits with each other, than in comparing him with his rivals or his predecessors. Thus it is undeniable, we think, that he was far more excellent as a Debater than as a Statesman. Whether or not he had superiors in eloquence among his contemporaries; how far he fell short of the exquisite models of ancient oratory; what portion of his rhetorical fame he owed to the accidental circumstance of Place, or the hardly less trivial merit of voice; in what proportions a careful analysis would lead us to distribute our admiration between the Parliamentary tactician and the Orator; and whether we are entitled to extol his genius or only his abilities in this kind — are questions that may divide men's opinions; as they will also be inclined to dispute upon the skill, the integrity, and the tendency of his measures. But we believe it may with all safety be affirmed, that, even in the present times, no difference of opinion worth mentioning prevails respecting the vast superiority of the Speaker to the Minister. Hardly any two rational men could be found to dispute what was Mr. Pitt's distinguishing excellence — his *forte*. Upon this, friend and foe will at once join: and point to him in his place as a first-rate Parliamentary leader: And probably, taking all the qualities together that go to form the character — eloquence — address — decision — discretion — he was the greatest ever produced in this, the only country where such a character is known. It is indeed marvellous to look back and observe how large a space he fills in the capacity of a debater, and into how narrow a compass his measures have already shrunk. But a little reflection easily explains the diversity. He was hurried into public life prematurely; and, though an orator may be forced, a ruler must grow. A young man of talents, whose studies have been sedulously pursued, may, at a very early age, attain all the accomplishments which enable natural genius to take the direction of eloquence. No great experience is required to mould this into the shape that suits any given assembly. Little more is wanting to carry him thus far, than can be learnt from books; but a very different study, and far longer experience, is necessary to make even the most sagacious person an able councillor in difficult emergencies; and it cannot be doubted, that the discipline requisite for this purpose is materially interrupted by the war of words, the habit which it begets of regarding every thing as a matter of discussion, and the tendency which it encourages to act with a view to the defence of measures, rather than their success.

It is probable, that a much greater variety of opinion will be formed upon the character of his eloquence, than upon the superiority of his talents as a Parliamentary leader. Upon his own greater excellency in that than in any other capacity, there can exist little doubt. But it does not follow, either that he was the first orator of his age, or that oratory, properly so called, was his own highest merit. His eloquence was of a kind peculiarly adapted to the situation which he filled so long: He was stately and dignified in manner; clear and distinct in unravelling the details of the most complicated subject; declamatory at once and argumentative, so as to furnish the best pretexts to those who wished to follow him, while he cheered and encouraged those who might be in dread of his adversaries; but, above all, he excelled in the use of both topics and language with a view to produce the effect he desired, and never commit himself; he could balance his expressions

so nicely — conceal or bring forward parts of his subject so artistly — approach, and yet shun dangerous points so dexterously — often seeming to say so much while he told so little, and almost always filling the ear more than the mind, and frequently leaving it doubtful upon reflexion, what had in substance been carried away — that a celebrated contemporary was scarcely chargeable with exaggeration * in saying, that ‘he verily believed Mr. Pitt could *speak a King’s Speech off hand.*’

To these qualities, so eminently fitting him for a Ministerial orator, he added others of a higher description. His fluency of language was almost preternatural, and yet it never grew tiresome; for though it seldom rose to any great beauty, yet it was generally characteristic and appropriate; and from time to time it did contain expressions of more than ordinary felicity, if, at its common level, it too much resembled the diction of a State-paper. He was rather loud and vehement than impassioned; and appeared to declaim more from the head than the heart: But then he reasoned closely, and arranged both quickly and accurately; or at least he seemed to be always arguing and distinguishing, and to address the understanding rather than the passions, over which he hardly had any other control than that which subjects the nerves of an audience to a sonorous and most powerful voice, itself under strict discipline. In one part of eloquence, and only in one, could he be deemed an orator of the highest genius: His sarcasm was at once keen and splendid; it was brilliant, and it was concise. In the rest of his speaking he resembled the Italian prose writers. In this he came nearer Dante; and could dispose of an adversary by a sentence or a single phrase; or, without stepping aside, get rid of him in a parenthesis, and then go forward to his object, — thus increasing the contemptuousness of the expression by its brevity and indifference, as if his victim had been too insignificant to give any trouble.

In viewing the opposite side of the picture, we must distinguish between defects and faults. That he had very little fancy, and no pathos; that his language was not pointed or epigrammatic; that his wit was never playful, and seldom aided his argument, being pointed towards his antagonist, and not his subject, is undeniable. But nearly the same deficiencies are to be found (except the last) in the greatest orator of ancient times, and are reckoned rather peculiarities which characterize, than imperfections which detract from, his prodigious merit. But Mr. Pitt’s diction was not of the highest or the purest kind; it was neither learned nor natural; and his style was extremely wordy. He could not arrive by a short and simple path at his point; he did not go by the straight line; he did not say the thing at once, but spoke about it and about it, and rounded off sentences which sometimes touched it, but at others only came near it. In throwing out finished periods, he had indeed a wonderful facility; and the listener could hardly conceive how any one should produce such composition at the call of the moment. But much of the merit consisted in this feat; and the same sentences, if written, would have excited no admiration as mere composition. It is a fault of more importance, that he rarely took an original or commanding, or even an ingenious view of a subject. But for a classical quotation, or an allusion to some part of English history, which now and then occurred, he might never have read any thing beyond the Parliamentary debates

* Mr. Windham.

and papers upon the table; nor did it seem as if the train of his thoughts ever led him beyond those subjects of contemplation. Though singularly distinct in the exposition of facts, and equally clear and extremely skilful in stating the terms of a question, his powers of reasoning at close quarters were by no means distinguished; and though he always charmed the hearer, he seldom overpowered him with that resistless torrent which makes the speaker and the speech be forgotten in the subject.

Mr. Fox's great superiority lay in the fulness of his matter; the large and original views which he took; the ingenuity of his illustrations; the flow of playful wit which always made a part, and often the most effectual part of his argument; the admirable closeness of his reasoning, and the vehemence with which he poured forth his whole feelings, as well as his thoughts;—and this abundance of matter it was that overcame all defects of voice and manner, and made his habitual carelessness, and hesitation of speech in some passages, only give the advantages of contrast to others, and relief rather than injury to the whole. It is most worthy however of remark, that, as in their character and conduct, so in their eloquence, neither of those great men had any faults of a mean or paltry kind. They spoke not for the sake of display, but to gain some important object; and their taste had nothing puerile or affected. Hence perhaps it is, that they both rather avoided than wanted the epigrammatic point so common in other orators, and which, though a beauty certainly in style, as well as a help to argument, when moderately used, is very apt to overrun the composition, and usurp the place of more grand and simple excellences. This, however, may justly be deemed an ornament more suited to the artificial manner of Mr. Pitt, and rather to have been expected in him than in his illustrious antagonist, to whose extreme simplicity it appears abhorrent. They were both thoroughly imbued with the spirit of ancient eloquence, having drunk deeply at its perennial fountains; and if they only profited by the refinement of taste which is derived from an intimate acquaintance with the poets and rhetoricians of antiquity, and did not, especially Mr. Fox, form themselves upon the model of the Greek or Roman orators, we should rather admire this as an additional proof of their original excellence, than question their profound and accurate learning, or doubt their having fully appreciated the transcendent merits of the fathers of the art; well assured that they can only be imitated by speaking, not as they spoke in their own day, but as they would have spoken in ours.

It is not to be doubted that Mr. Pitt, though from the first fitted for his station by habits of composure, method, self-command, fluency of speech, quickness in seizing, and dexterity in pursuing an advantage, was, by its continued duties and manifold facilities, prodigiously improved in those official qualities; while Mr. Fox's defects as a leader might principally be traced to his long exclusion from power, and to the openness and warmth of his temper. We are not here alluding to the personal influence of the two men; for, in that particular, there is no comparison; no statesman, without patronage at home, and power abroad, ever possessed any thing like the individual authority which Mr. Fox had during the last twenty years of his life, both in his own country and among foreign States. But we speak merely of the skill and management in debate which Mr. Pitt had acquired beyond any other party chief; and he certainly owed it, in a great degree, to his

long experience as a minister, as well as to his natural talents, and the coolness, not to say coldness, of his temperament. When his situation was changed, he was not so versatile as his adversary; and the all-powerful defender of measures proved by no means so formidable an assailant. A little more practice would probably have removed this inequality; but the talents of an opposition leader he made little account of, and would never give himself time to acquire. Had he chosen to remain out of place, we might soon have said of him, as we now do of Mr. Fox—‘*Lateribus pugnans, incitans animos; acer, acerbus, criminosus;*’—while on the other hand, perhaps, a length of ministerial habits might have transferred to the latter some of the peculiarities of his adversary, and enabled us to say of him—‘*Erat in verbis gravitas, et facile dicebat, et auctoritatem naturalem quandam habebat oratio.*’ (*Brutus*, 62.)

In passing from the Orator to the Statesman, we may remark, that though a much greater diversity of opinion may be expected, yet there can be little hesitation with regard to the fundamental objection which is applicable to his whole conduct; the want of those great and commanding views of policy, boldly formed, and steadily pursued, whereby a vast and original genius for state affairs is evinced. Mr. Pitt never went before his age; he rather lagged behind it; and we shall in vain look to the history of his administration for traces of a master mind. He seems to have taken his principles from others, and only busied himself with contriving or arranging the details, and presenting the results in a plausible form to the public. Nineteen years in power such as no minister of this country ever before possessed; nearly half the time in profound peace, and in as great favour with the People as with the Court—how could a man of genius leave so little to claim the gratitude, or even arrest the attention of posterity? It seems impossible to avoid concluding, either that his talents were unequal to such high exertions, or that they lay in another direction. It seems as if he had rather been employing all his faculties in preserving the power he so prematurely acquired, than seeking to use that power for the benefit of mankind, and the illustration of his name in after ages. Nor did he, generally speaking, attempt the accomplishment of his plans, whatever might be their merits, with that disregard of consequences to his own power, which alone commands success, and alone deserves it; distinguishing the lofty ambition of a patriot statesman from the buoyancy of a courtly intriguer.

The admirers of Mr. Pitt’s conduct are apt to take their stand, first of all, upon his Financial measures. Nor can it be denied that there is here somewhat to commend; for he introduced a variety of improvements in the collection of the Revenue; he simplified exceedingly the management of the permanent branches of it; and he showed, for once in the history of taxation, that the produce of an impost may be increased by diminishing its amount. But what a minute proportion do these, his very earliest measures, bear to the whole course of his financial administration, which, in almost every other part, was a series of mistakes or of popular delusions! Leaving out of view, for the present, that system of wasteful extravagance, the only systematic scheme of which he is the author, and the portion of his policy which his successors have the most scrupulously followed; supposing that all the immense expenditure by which he has crushed down the country was necessary; and that the only question was, whether the

best means were adopted to provide for it—we shall vainly seek, in any other age or nation, for specimens of taxes more flagrantly violating every sound principle, or of expedients for raising money more improvident, and even pernicious, than those presented by the course of shifts and devices which he employed to carry on the War with France.

For some years he went on, chiefly by increasing the old duties, and without any selection as to their pressure, either upon the poorer classes, or upon that fund which alone forms the legitimate source of all revenue, the produce of capital and labour. Those which he raised highest fell upon the necessities of life, as the Salt-duties, which he began by doubling; or upon the transference of property, and, we may add, upon distress and embarrassment, as the Stamp-duties; or upon commercial intercourse, as the duties on tolls and carriage of parcels,—which indeed he was forced to abandon immediately, but only from finding it impossible to collect them. The taxes which he added to those handed down to him by his predecessors, were among the worst that can be imagined. Some of them fell at once upon capital, as the Legacy-tax; others, upon necessities and labour, even more directly than such impolitic imposts usually do—for example, the duty on candles. Then he relied, at one time, upon a renewal of the Bank Monopoly, twelve years before it expired; at another, upon obtaining from the East India Company sums which it could not pay without getting as much back in some other shape immediately after. One year, his resource was to beg voluntary donations from those whom he had alarmed with the fears of Revolution and invasion; and the next, he would open a loan, which the Loyal portion of the community were first extolled to the skies for taking with all its risks, and then indemnified when it became a losing concern. Shifts and expedients appearing to be exhausted, he then professed to bring forward a new system of finance, upon solid principles;—and it turned out to be the clumsy and cruel plan of trebling at once the old assessments. This *invention* was to produce seven millions, at the lowest, and after making the most ample allowance for evasions and other deficiencies,—eight being the sum he really expected, but only four and a half were raised. At length came the most desperate resource of unskilful financiers, when all fair ways and means fail—a direct tax upon income, which was to cover every deficit, with a revenue of ten millions, and being so contrived as to be at once oppressive and unproductive, yielded in his hands little more than half the sum; though his successors, with somewhat more of ingenuity and contrivance, made it the most gainful as well as intolerable duty known in modern times.

Amongst all these expedients to raise money, and prop for a season the credit of the country, not once did he ever seem to reflect on the great revenue, and still greater security to be derived from economy. His reforms, many of which deserve high commendation, and proved effectual even beyond his hopes, were all in the collection of the taxes, never in the expenditure. He could not face the clamour of reduced placemen and fairly paid contractors; nor durst he, with the country in his favour, and the Court dependent upon his support, through the influence of real or fancied dangers, ever place among his ways and means such retrenchments as might relieve the nation's burthens at the expence of the Crown's patronage. His reforms in the Revenue

departments were, indeed, attended with a large increase of direct influence to the Treasury, which, under his administration, monopolized the patronage of the Boards. But it must be added, that he left to his successors the discovery of a right in those Boards to compensation for this loss. With all his extravagance, and his facility towards jobbers, the author of the Bonus to the Loyalty Loan contractors could not strike out any thing to match those who have since increased the salaries of public servants, as a compensation for patronage transferred to the Government.

But the measures of finance by which Mr. Pitt will be the longest remembered, are the Sinking Fund and Depreciation of the Currency. The former was his favourite measure; he gloried in having raised a column to support public credit for ever; a column, upon which he desired that his name might be inscribed as the only reward of all his labours. It seems now pretty manifest, that this remuneration will not be very ample; but during his life, and for some years after, the opinions of men were very generally in favour of the Sinking Fund. That the plan was not originally devised by him, but adopted from Dr. Price's calculations, we account very little deduction from his merit; for assuredly the step is great which a statesman makes, when he embodies the ideas of ingenious and speculative men in a substantive measure, and carries it into execution. Nor does it seem possible to have arranged the details better than he did, or to have given more effect to the scheme in its practical operation. But no one who considers the question, now entertains a doubt that a Sinking Fund, during war at least, while new loans are contracting, is arithmetically absurd; and that a large actual loss has been incurred by the country, from adhering to the plan in those circumstances. An objection exists, too, of a more radical nature, and applicable to such a plan even in time of peace, at least where the sums yearly raised to support the fund are considerable. The capital accumulates at compound interest only, when in the hands of the Government, doubling in fourteen years. But if left in the hands of private persons, its accumulation would be far more rapid; and, by increasing the income of the community, would enable a skilful government to augment the revenue, or pay off the debt more expeditiously, and with less burthen to the people. It can hardly be questioned, then, that the renown anticipated by Mr. Pitt from this achievement, will be of a very doubtful character in after ages, if indeed the structure which records it should have any considerable duration. The other great measure for saving the country and securing its credit, the Stoppage of the Bank and Depreciation of our Currency, has already been the fruitful source of incalculable misfortunes, and, followed by the restoration of that currency in a moment of general delusion, promises to prove at all events as *lasting* a monument as any statesman ever raised to perpetuate his name.

Educated as Mr. Pitt was in the doctrine of the most improved economical systems, and possessed of enlarged and liberal views upon all subjects, it was impossible that he should fall into the gross errors of his narrow-minded predecessors, in matters of commercial policy; and where his financial operations ran counter to the true interests of trade, we must not impute the error to ignorance. He knew better than he could venture to act,—placed as he was in the necessity of obtaining money at all hazards, and averse to alarm those domestic

powers on whose support he chose far too implicitly to rest his official existence.

But if a lavish expenditure, ever driving him to shifts, was the vice of his internal administration, the cause of his extravagance lay in those errors in his foreign policy, about which there can hardly be two opinions. As a leading statesman in the close of the eighteenth century, he must be judged by his conduct with respect to the French Revolution, and the wars which it occasioned. His capital mistake in relation to both, was the never forming a clear and decided plan of operations, consistent in itself, and pointing to some definite and attainable object. He met the Revolution at first with an indifferent, if not a friendly disposition; and when, as his adherents say, from its aspect being changed, or, as his adversaries assert, from the temptation of dividing them, and securing the favour of the court, he became hostile to France and her revolutionary government, he carried on his operations so as to ensure their failure,—because he never attacked the new order of things with the force derived from an alliance with the old, and because he made war upon her by a multitude of detailed and insignificant operations, in which success was unavailing and defeat fatal, instead of attempting to strike some one great and decisive blow. He thus reaped all the disadvantages of every plan in combating the Revolution—opposed by the energies of the country, as if he had been fighting under the White flag and the Lilies; distrusted by the royalists, as if he had borne the tri-coloured cockade; exhausting the resources of Europe, as if he had embodied all her powers at once in general array; and sacrificing her by piecemeal to the undivided strength and rapacious ambition of the enemy, as if each had fought single-handed, and the want of unity could not be supplied by concert.

Equally inconsistent and devoid of all intelligible principle, was the course of his negotiations. He went to war without any conceivable justification, except distrust of the revolutionary government, and alarm lest its neighbourhood should prove fatal to our internal tranquillity; and yet he thrice treated for peace with that same revolutionary government, at a time when its form was so fluctuating, that it changed during one of the negotiations. After passing through various stages, an alteration took place which promised a degree of stability unknown since the destruction of the old dynasty; but with the chief who had been placed at the head of the new system, he indignantly refused to hold communion, upon objections of a personal nature; as if the relations of peace could be safely formed with the five Directors who happened at the moment to bear sway, and of whom little or nothing was known, while all intercourse was impossible with a single person in firm possession of the supreme civil and military authority in the State. The past conduct of this extraordinary man was the principal ground of rejecting his proposals. Yet in about one year afterwards, Mr. Pitt supported the policy of those who willingly treated with the same individual; though he had certainly not changed his nature in the interval, but only made himself more formidable and less easy to deal with, by extending his power at home, and humbling his enemies abroad. In a year after this treaty was concluded, the ministers began to be afraid of what they had done; and Mr. Pitt, once more discovering that there was no safety

but in war, hurried them on to break the peace, and to sacrifice whatever remained of independence in Europe.

If Mr. Burke had conducted the affairs of England in those days, at least there would have been an intelligible course pursued in negotiation and in war; he would only have treated with the ancient government of France. He would have opposed the new system as such, backed by the Royalist party, or rather aiding them in attacking the revolutionary order of things, and not seizing the opportunity of taking a few ships and sugar islands. He would alike have refused to negotiate with the Committee of Public Safety, the Directory, and the Consuls; and, far from deeming the extension of the enemy's power a reason for seeking peace at his hands, would have shown greater aversion to his advances when covered with laurels, than when only polluted with crimes. If Mr. Fox had swayed the councils of the country, he might perhaps have taken the same course as Mr. Burke; but it is far more likely that he would have abstained from all interference with the internal affairs of France—shown a friendly disposition towards the people—and cautiously, but inoffensively kept aloof from their rulers, neither courting their friendship nor provoking their enmity, though ready at all times to check the least encroachment upon our rights, and to resent any invasion of the territory of our allies. Mr. Pitt, however, followed neither of these courses; but resorted to half measures, as if he had never looked the subject full in the face, and were undecided how to view it. He could neither remain quietly at peace, nor vigorously and strenuously urge the war; he seemed by turns to partake of all the opinions held by conflicting politicians, to take a little out of each system, and to pursue one line until he received a check which threw him upon the opposite course.

His adherents indeed contend, that, after all, his policy was successful; and would fain ascribe to it the unexpected turn of Continental affairs after the Moscow campaign. If asked, however, what they mean by his policy, the only answer is, that he kept up the spirit of resistance to France which in the end led to her discomfiture, and opposed the Revolutionary government which has now been overthrown. But the facts unfortunately preclude all such assumptions in Mr. Pitt's favour; and entirely disconnect him with the changes which have recently taken place. He thrice treated with the remains of the Jacobins, and once with Bonaparte; whose insane ambition it was that hurried on the ruin of his dynasty, and created the counter-revolution. The inferior race of politicians who succeeded to Mr. Pitt, really carried on the war upon far sounder principles, and, for the first time, made the attack in the right place, and with the requisite force; they were led on by degrees to do so; and even they, superior as their policy was to his, through the accidents of the times, would in vain have expended the blood and treasure of the country, had not those unlooked for events come to their aid, to which every man of common discernment traces the issue of the war. But for those chances, their extravagance would have been as entirely fruitless (to compare great things with small) as the cost of the Caledonian Canal was before the lucky invention of the steam boat.

Let it not be imagined that they who hold this opinion of Mr. Pitt's policy, foreign and financial, during the Wars of the Revolution, necessarily deny his talents as a statesman in ordinary times. The difficulties

of his situation were of a nature wholly unparalleled in history; a person of great steadiness might well have faltered in his course through such a sea of troubles; and the resources of a very fertile mind might have easily been exhausted by the strange and novel exigencies of the crisis. Nor have we a right severely to blame him who met this demand, rather by extraordinary devices than happy ones. A minister may well be deemed able, whom we must allow to have been unequal to such novel emergencies; and much of greatness may be attached to the name of Mr. Pitt, while we are compelled wholly to reject the extravagant praises which his followers have lavished upon him. In the policy which he pursued during the more ordinary times which preceded the Revolution, far less appears to censure; and, with the exception of the Russian armament and negotiation, his conduct in relation to foreign powers was firm, consistent, and prosperous. The able and successful measures adopted in the affairs of Holland gained the unqualified approbation of all parties, and the French Commercial Treaty was never impeached with any effect.

Hitherto, we have almost wholly confined our attention to the talents and wisdom of this distinguished person; his claim to the higher praise of political Integrity will be the subject of far more disputation. All men will readily admit, that there was nothing petty or sordid in his character, at least in the worst sense of the terms; but it can hardly be denied, that the flights of a generous ambition are considerably lowered when it stoops to take or to keep mere office with crippled power, by the surrender of opinions upon important points. We pass over Mr. Pitt's change of sentiments upon Parliamentary Reform, and shall admit it to have been sincere when the Revolutionary alarm had begun to spread. But how many years did he continue in power before 1791, without exerting himself in favour of a measure which he still deemed essential to the public safety, half so vigorously as he constantly did for the most paltry Government measures? A speech or two, indeed, he delivered during that period, re-asserting the doctrines which he had maintained while in opposition; but he appears in no one instance to have exerted the influence of Government for the purpose of giving effect to his opinions. In short, he may have been sincere,—but he was not zealous; and to hold opinions such as his on so great a question, with indifference, seems hardly consistent with our ideas of perfect purity, more especially when it is borne in mind that the Courtiers were against him, and a loss of place might have been the effect of indiscreet ardour. The same remark applies to the Abolition of the Slave Trade, which it clearly appears he might have carried many years before his death, with perfect ease, had he chosen to make it a Cabinet Question. To no *speaker* is that important subject more indebted; to no *minister* so little: And then, with his feelings on the detested traffic, so loudly expressed during ten years, to double its amount at once for the sake of capturing some pestilent territory, where a word from the Executive could have excluded it without any interposition of Parliament, truly strikes the calm observer of these times with astonishment and dismay. In one respect, indeed, he was a far kinder friend to the Abolition than to Reform; for he never joined in persecuting the disciples of the former doctrine; whereas he had no sooner received a new light upon the latter, than he was found leagued with the men who proscribed Reformers, and endeavoured to treat them as rebels.

His resignation in 1801, upon the ground that the Catholic Question could not be carried, reflects great honour upon his memory ; but this is materially tarnished by his consenting, three years after, to resume his place without any stipulation in its favour : although few men can now doubt that, had he remained firm with Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, the intolerant faction which had possession of the Court must needs have yielded ; and fewer can deny, that the paramount importance of such a question demanded from Mr. Pitt's consistency, as well as his patriotism, the sacrifice of all party and personal views. The course which he preferred proved, in the result, as unfortunate for his own interest as for that of his country. He formed an administration so weak in all its parts, that he transacted the whole business of Government himself ; and to give it numerical strength in Parliament, he was forced to unite with the fragments of those whom he had displaced, in a manner sufficiently indicative of his contempt. His ill-fated schemes of a fourth coalition, far exceeding all the rest in crudeness and in costliness, produced results proportionably more ruinous to England and to Europe ; and he died at a time when, having failed in all his plans, and deserved his failures in most of them, his partial admirers could, with confidence, point to the Irish Union alone of all his various projects, as equally entitled to the applause of his own age and the gratitude of posterity.

It is a very common thing, in discussing the merits of statesmen, to make a distinction between their public and private character ; but, in an enlarged sense, no real difference of this kind can be admitted. He who can do an unworthy act for the sake of power, would do the same for pelf,—if he happened to feel the want of it, or to place as high value upon it ; and that he reserves the practice of base arts for the gratification of his ambition alone, proves his estimate of the object to vary rather than his scrupulousness about the means. Subject to this remark, we must allow Mr. Pitt's private character to have been unimpeachable, in the ordinary sense of the term. The correctness of his demeanour, no doubt, proceeded in a good degree from physical temperament. Convivial pleasures were the only ones he indulged in ; and this is certainly the foundation of his reputation for strict moral conduct. It is true that he fulfilled all the private relations of life in a manner the most exemplary, and that no man was ever more beloved in the circle of his friends. But this may, with perfectly equal truth, be affirmed of his illustrious antagonist, whom, nevertheless, it has always been the practice to contrast with him in respect of strict morality ; while the only difference appears pretty clearly to have arisen from natural coldness, aided by the early and confirmed habits of an official life.*

* Those who wish to peruse one of the most plausible and eloquent defences ever published of Mr. Pitt's character as a Statesman and an Orator, should consult the 4th Vol. of the *Quarterly Review*, page 207. The Article in which the sketch appears is written with uncommon force and ability, though, as may be inferred from the political principles of that Journal, the writer professes to see nothing reprehensible in the public measures of the distinguished object of his impressive panegyric.

DR. LAURENCE AND EDMUND BURKE.*

DR. LAURENCE was one of the most singularly endowed men, in some respects, that ever appeared in public life. He united in himself the indefatigable labour of a Dutch Commentator, with the alternate playfulness and sharpness of a Parisian Wit. His general information was boundless; his powers of mastering a given subject, were not to be resisted by any degree of dryness or complication in its details; and his fancy was lively enough to shed light upon the darkest, and to strew flowers round the most barren tracks of inquiry, had it been suffered to play easily and vent itself freely. But, unfortunately, he had only the conception of the Wit, with the execution of the Commentator; it was not Scarron or Voltaire speaking in society, or Mirabeau in public, from the stores of Erasmus or of Bayle; but it was Hemsterhuysius emerging into polished life, with the dust of many libraries upon him, to make the circle gay; it was Grævius entering the Senate with somewhere from one-half to two-thirds of his forthcoming folio at his fingers' ends, to awaken the flagging attention, and strike animation into the lazy debate. He might have spoken with the wit of Voltaire and the humour of Scarron united; none of it could pierce through the lumber of his solid matter; and any spark that by chance found its way, was stifled by the still more uncouth manner. As an author, he had no such defects; his profuse stores of knowledge, his business-like habit of applying them to the point; his taste, generally speaking correct, because originally formed on the models of antiquity, and only relaxed by his admiration of Mr. Burke's less severe beauties; all gave him a facility of writing, both copiously and nervously, upon serious subjects; while his wit could display itself upon lighter ones unincumbered by pedantry, and unobstructed by the very worst delivery ever witnessed,—a delivery calculated to alienate the mind of the hearer, to beguile him of his attention, but by stealing it away from the speaker, and almost to prevent him from comprehending what was so spoken. It was in reference to this unvarying effect of Doctor Laurence's delivery, that Mr. Fox once said, a man should attend, if possible, to a speech of his, and then speak it over again himself: it must, he conceived, succeed infallibly, for it was sure to be admirable in itself, and as certain of being new to the audience. But in this saying there was considerably more wit than truth. The Doctor's speech was sure to contain *materials* not for one, but for half a dozen speeches; and a person might with great advantage listen to it, in order to use those materials, in part, afterwards, as indeed many did both in Parliament and at the Bar where he practised, make an effort to attend to him, how difficult soever, in order to hear all that could be said upon every part of the question. But whoever did so, was sure to hear a vast deal that was useless, and could serve no purpose but to perplex and fatigue; and he was equally sure to hear the immaterial points treated with as much vehemence, and as minutely dwelt upon, as the great and commanding features of the subject. In short, the Commentator was here again displayed, who never can perceive the

* Epistolary Correspondence of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke and Dr. French Laurence.—Vol. xlv. page 269. October, 1827.

different value of different matters; who gives no relief to his work, and exhausts all the stores of his learning, and spends the whole power of his ingenuity, 'as eagerly in dethroning one particle which has usurped another's place, as in overthrowing the interpolated verse in St. John, or the spurious chapter in Josephus, upon which may depend the foundations of a religion, or the articles of its faith.

It is hardly necessary to add, that they who saw Dr. Laurence only in debate, saw him to the greatest disadvantage, and had no means of forming anything like a fair estimate of his merits. In the lighter intercourse of society, too, unless in conversation wholly unrestrained by the desire of distinction, he appeared to little advantage; his mirth, though perfectly inoffensive and good-natured, was elaborate; his wit or drollery wanted concentration and polish; it was unwieldy and clumsy; it was the gamboling of the elephant, in which, if strength was seen, weight was felt still more; nor was it Milton's elephant, recreating our first parents; and who, 'to make them play, would 'wreath his lithe proboscis;'—but the elephant capered bodily, and in a lumbering fashion, after the manner of his tribe. Yet set the same man down to write, and whose compositions are marked by more perfect propriety, more conciseness, more point, more rapidity? His wit sparkles and illuminates, without more effort than is requisite for throwing it off. It is varied, too, and each kind is excellent. It is a learned wit, very frequently, and then wears an elaborate air; but not stiff or pedantic, not forced or strained, unless we deem Swift's wit, when it assumes this garb, unnatural or heavy—a sentence which would condemn some of his most famous pieces, and sweep away almost all Arbuthnot's together.

In his profession, Dr. Laurence filled the highest place. Practising in courts where a single judge decides, and where the whole matter of each cause is thoroughly sifted and prepared for discussion out of court, he experienced no ill effect from the tedious style and unattractive manner which a jury could not have borne, and felt not the want of that presence of mind, and readiness of execution, which enable a *Nisi Prius* advocate to decide and to act at the moment, according to circumstances suddenly arising and impossible to foresee. He had all the qualities which his branch of the forensic art requires; profound learning, various and accurate information upon ordinary affairs as well as the contents of books, and a love of labour, not to be satiated by any prolixity and minuteness of detail into which the most complicated cause could run—a memory which let nothing escape that it had once grasped, whether large in size or imperceptibly small—an abundant subtlety in the invention of topics to meet an adversary's arguments, and a penetration that never left one point of his own case unexplored. These qualities might very possibly have been modified and blended with the greater terseness and dexterity of the common lawyer, had his lot been cast in Westminster Hall; but in the precincts of St. Paul's, they were more than sufficient to place him at the head of his brethren, and to obtain for him the largest share of practice which any Civilian of the time could enjoy without office.

The same fulness of information and facility of invention which were so invaluable to his clients, proved most important resources to his political associates, during the thirteen or fourteen years that he sat in Parliament; and they were almost equally useful to the great party he was connected with, for many years before that period. It

was a common remark, that nothing could equal the richness of his stores, except the liberality with which he made them accessible to all. Little as he for some time before his death had taken part in debates, and scantily as he had been attended to when he did, his loss might be plainly perceived, for a long time, in the want generally felt of that kind of information which had flowed so copiously through all the channels of private intercourse, and been obtained so easily, that its importance was not felt until its sources were closed for ever. It was then that men inquired 'where Laurence was,' as often as a difficulty arose which called for more than common ingenuity to meet it; or a subject presented itself so large and shapeless, and dry and thorny, that few men's fortitude could face, and no one's patience could grapple with it; or an emergency occurred, demanding, on the sudden, access to stores of learning, the collection of many long years, but arranged so as to be available to the most ignorant at the shortest notice. Men lamented the great loss they had experienced, and their regrets were mingled with wonder when they reflected that the same blow had deprived them of qualities the most rarely found in company with such acquirements; for, unwilling as the jealousy of human vanity is to admit various excellence in a single individual, (*mos hominum ut nolint eundem pluribus rebus excellere,*) it was invain to deny that the same person, who exceeded all others in powers of hard working upon the dullest subjects, and who had, by his life of labour, become as a Dictionary to his friends, had also produced a larger share than any one contributor, to the epigrams, the burlesques, the grave ironies and the broad jokes, whether in verse or in prose, of the Rolliad.

The highest of the praises which Dr. Laurence had a right to challenge, remains. He was a man of scrupulous integrity and unsullied honour; faithful in all trusts; disinterested to a weakness. Constant, but rather let it be said, ardent and enthusiastic in his friendships; abandoning his whole faculties with a self-derelection that knew no bounds, either to the cause of his friend, or his party, or the common-weal — he commanded the unceasing respect of all with whom he came in contact, or even in conflict; for when most offended with his zeal, they were forced to admit, that what bore the semblance of intolerance was the fruit of an honest anxiety for a friend or a principle, and never was pointed towards himself. To the praise of correct judgment he was not so well entitled. His naturally warm temperament, and his habit of entering into whatever he took up with his whole faculties, as well as all his feelings, kindled in him the two great passions which chequered the latter part of Mr. Burke's life; he spent some years upon Mr. Hastings's Impeachment, and some upon the French Revolution, so absorbed in those subjects that their impression could not be worn out; and he ever after appeared to see one or other of them, and not unfrequently both together, on whatever ground he might cast his eyes. This almost morbid affection he shared with his protector and friend, of whom we are now to speak.

How much soever men may differ as to the soundness of Mr. Burke's doctrine, or the purity of his public conduct, there can be no hesitation in according to him a station among the most extraordinary men that have ever appeared; and we think there is now but little diversity of opinion as to the kind of place which it is fit to assign him. He was a writer of the first class, and excelled in almost every kind of prose composition. Possessed of most extensive knowledge, and of the most

various description; acquainted alike with what different classes of men knew, each in his own province, and with much that hardly any one ever thought of learning; he could either bring his masses of information to bear directly upon the subjects to which they severally belonged — or he could avail himself of them generally to strengthen his faculties and enlarge his views — or he could turn any portion of them to account for the purpose of illustrating his theme, or enriching his diction. Hence, when he is handling any one matter, we perceive that we are conversing with a reasoner or a teacher, to whom almost every other branch of knowledge is familiar: his views range over all the cognate subjects; his reasonings are derived from principles applicable to other theories as well as the one in hand: arguments pour in from all sides, as well as those which start up under our feet, the natural growth of the path he is leading us over; while to throw light round our steps, and either explore its darker places, or serve for our recreation, illustrations are fetched from a thousand quarters; and an imagination marvellously quick to descry unthought-of resemblances, points to our use the stores, which a lore yet more marvellous has gathered from all ages, and nations, and arts, and tongues. We are, in respect of the argument, reminded of Bacon's multifarious knowledge, and the exuberance of his learned fancy; while the many-lettered diction recalls to mind the first of English poets, and his immortal verse, rich with the spoils of all sciences and all times.

The kinds of composition are various, and he excels in them all, with the exception of two, the very highest, given but to few, and when given, almost always possessed alone, — fierce, nervous, overwhelming declamation, and close, rapid argument. Every other he uses easily, abundantly, and successfully. He produced but one philosophical treatise; but no man lays down abstract principles more soundly, or better traces their application. All his works, indeed, even his controversial, are so informed with general reflection, so variegated with speculative discussion, that they wear the air of the Lyceum as well as the Academy. His narrative is excellent; and it is impossible more luminously to expose the details of a complicated subject, to give them more animation and interest, if dry in themselves, or to make them bear, by the mere power of statement, more powerfully upon the argument. In description he can hardly be surpassed, at least for effect; he has all the qualities that conduce to it — ardour of purpose, sometimes rising into violence — vivid, but too luxuriant fancy, — bold, frequently extravagant, conception — the faculty of shedding over mere inanimate scenery the light imparted by moral associations. He indulges in bitter invective, mingled with poignant wit, but descending often to abuse and even scurrility; he is apt moreover to carry an attack too far, as well as strain the application of a principle; to slay the slain, or turn the reader's contempt into pity.

As in the various kinds of writing, so in the different styles, he had an almost universal excellence, one only being deficient, the plain and unadorned. Not but that he could, in unfolding a doctrine or pursuing a narrative, write for a little with admirable simplicity and propriety; only he could not sustain this self-denial; his brilliant imagination and well-stored memory soon broke through the restraint. But in all other styles, passages without end occur of the highest order — epigram — pathos — metaphor in profusion, chequered with more didactic and sober diction. Nor are his purely figurative passages the finest even

as figured writing ; he is best when the metaphor is subdued, mixed as it were with plainer matter to flavour it, and used not by itself, and for its own sake, but giving point to a more useful instrument, made of more ordinary material ; or at the most, flung off by the heat of composition, like sparks from a working engine, not fire works for mere display. Speaking of the authors of the Declaration of Right, he calls them ‘ those whose penetrating style has engraved in our ordinances and in our hearts, the words and spirit of that immortal law.’—(*Reflections on the French Revolution.*) So discoursing of the imitations of natural magnitude by artifice and skill—‘ A true artist should put a generous deceit on the spectators, and effect the noblest designs by easy methods.’—(*Sublime and Beautiful, Part 2. § 10.*) ‘ When pleasure is over we relapse into indifference, or rather we fall into a soft tranquillity, which is tinged with the agreeable colour of the former sensation.’—(*Ibid. Part 1. § 3.*) ‘ Every age has its own manners, and its politics dependent on them ; and the same attempts will not be made against a constitution fully formed and matured, that were used to destroy it in the cradle, or resist its growth during its infancy.’—(*Thoughts on the Causes of the present Discontents.*) ‘ Faction will make its cries resound through the nation, as if the whole were in an uproar.’—(*Ibid.*) In works of a serious nature, upon the affairs of real life, as political discourses and orations, figurative style should hardly ever go beyond this. But a strict and close metaphor or simile may be allowed, provided it be most sparingly used, and never deviate from the subject matter, so as to make it disappear in the ornament. ‘ The judgment is for the greater part employed in throwing stumbling blocks in the way of the imagination,’ (says Mr. Burke,) ‘ in dissipating the scenes of its enchantment, and in tying us down to the disagreeable yoke of our reason.’—(*Discourses on Taste.*) He has here at once expressed figuratively the principle we are laying down, and illustrated our remark by the temperance of his metaphors, which, though mixed, do not offend, because they come so near mere figurative language that they may be regarded, like the last set of examples, rather as forms of expression than tropes. ‘ A great deal of the furniture of ancient tyranny is worn to rags ; the rest is entirely out of fashion.’—(*Thoughts on the Discontents.*) A most apt illustration of his important position, that we ought to be as jealous of little encroachments, now the chief sources of danger, as our ancestors were of *Ship Money* and the *Forest Laws*. ‘ A species of men,’ (speaking of one constant and baneful effect of grievances,) ‘ to whom a state of order would become a sentence of obscurity, are nourished into a dangerous magnitude by the heat of intestine disturbances ; and it is no wonder that, by a sort of sinister piety, they cherish, in return, those disorders which are the parents of all their consequence.’—(*Ibid.*) ‘ We have not’ (says he of the English Church establishment) ‘ relegated religion to obscure municipalities or rustic villages—No ! we will have her to exalt her mitred front in courts and parliaments.’—(*Reflections on the French Revolution.*) But if these should seem so temperate as hardly to be separate figures, the celebrated comparison of the Queen of France, though going to the verge of chaste style, hardly passes it. ‘ And surely, never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering

‘ the elevated sphere she just began to move in — glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendour, and joy.’— (*Ibid.*)

All his writings, but especially his later ones, abound in examples of the abuse of this style, in which, unlike those we have been dwelling upon with unmixed admiration, the subject is lost sight of, and the figure usurps its place, almost as much as in Homer’s longer *similes*, and is oftentimes pursued, not merely with extravagance and violence, but into details that offend by their coarseness, as well as their strained connexion with the matter in question. The comparison of a noble adversary to the whale, in which the grantee of the crown is altogether forgotten, and the fish alone remains; of one Republican ruler to a cannibal in his den, where he paints him as having actually devoured a king and suffering from indigestion; of another, to a retailer of dresses, in which character the nature of constitutions is forgotten in that of millinery,— are instances too well known to be further dwelt upon; and they were the produce, not of the ‘audacity of youth,’ but of the last year of his life. It must, however, be confessed, that he was at all times somewhat tainted with what Johnson imputes to Swift, a proneness to ‘revolve ideas from which other minds shrink with disgust.’ At least he must be allowed to have often mistaken violence and grossness for vigour. ‘The anodyne draught of oblivion, thus drugged, is well calculated to preserve a galling wakefulness, and to feed the living ulcer of a corroding memory. Thus to administer the opiate potion of animosity, powdered with all the ingredients of scorn and contempt,’ &c.— (*Reflections on the French Revolution.*) ‘They are not repelled through a fastidious delicacy at the stench of their arrogance and presumption, from a medicinal attention to their mental blotches and running sores.’— (*Ibid.*) ‘Those bodies, which, when full of life and beauty, lay in their arms, and were their joy and comfort, when dead and putrid, became but the more loathsome from remembrance of former endearments.’— (*Thoughts.*) ‘The vital powers, wasted in an unequal struggle, are pushed back upon themselves, and fester to gangrene, to death; and instead of what was but just now the delight of the creation, there will be cast out in the face of the sun, a bloated, putrid, noisome carcase, full of stench and poison, an offence, a horror, a lesson to the world.’ (*Speech on the Nabob’s Debts.*) Some passages are not fit to be cited, and could not now be tolerated in either house of Parliament, for the indecency of their allusions—as in the Regency debates, and the attack upon lawyers on the Impeachment continuation. But the finest of his speeches, which we have just quoted from, though it does not go so far from propriety, falls not much within its bounds. Of Mr. Dundas he says—‘With six great chopping bastards, (*Reports of Secret Committee,*) each as lusty as an infant Hercules, this delicate creature blushes at the sight of his new bridegroom, assumes a virgin delicacy; or, to use a more fit, as well as a more poetical comparison, the person so squeamish, so timid, so trembling, lest the winds of heaven should visit too roughly, is expanded to broad sunshine, exposed like the sow of imperial augury, lying in the mud with all the prodigies of her fertility about her, as evidence of her delicate amour.’— (*Ibid.*)

It is another characteristic of this great writer, that the unlimited abundance of his stores makes him profuse in their expenditure: Never

content with one view of a subject, or one manner of handling it, he for the most part lavishes his whole resources upon the discussion of each point. In controversy this is emphatically the case. Indeed, nothing is more remarkable than the variety of ways in which he makes his approaches to any position he would master. After reconnoitring it with skill and boldness, if not with perfect accuracy, he manœuvres with infinite address, and arrays a most imposing force of general principles mustered from all parts, and pointed, sometimes violently enough, in one direction. He now moves on with the composed air, the even, dignified pace of the historian; and unfolds his facts in a narrative so easy, and yet so correct, that you plainly perceive he wanted only the dismissal of other pursuits to have rivalled Livy or Hume. But soon this advance is interrupted, and he stops to display his powers of description—when the boldness of his design is only matched by the brilliancy of his colouring. He then skirmishes for a space, and puts in motion all the lighter arms of wit—sometimes not unmingled with drollery—sometimes bordering upon farce. His main battery is now opened, and a tempest bursts forth, of every weapon of attack—invective—abuse—irony—sarcasm—simile, drawn out to allegory—allusion—quotation—fable—parable—anathema. The heavy artillery of powerful declamation, and the conflict of close argument alone are wanting; but of this the garrison is not always aware; his noise is oftentimes mistaken for the thunder of true eloquence; the number of his movements distracts, and the variety of his missiles annoys the adversary; a panic spreads, and he carries his point, as if he had actually made a practicable breach; nor is it discovered till after the smoke and confusion is over, that the citadel remains untouched.

Every one of Mr. Burke's works that is of any importance, presents, though in different degrees, these features to the view—from the most chaste and temperate, his *Thoughts on the Discontents*, to the least faultless and severe—his richer and more ornate, as well as vehement tracts upon revolutionary politics—his letters on the *Regicide Peace*, and *Defence* of his *Pension*. His speeches differ not at all from his pamphlets; these are written speeches, or those are spoken dissertations, according as any one is over studious of method and closeness in a book, or of ease and nature in an oration. The principal defects which we have hinted at are a serious derogation from merit of the highest order in both kinds of composition. But in his spoken eloquence, the failure which it is known attended him for a great part of his Parliamentary life, is not to be explained by the mere absence of what alone he wanted to equal the greatest of orators.

In fact, he was deficient in judgment; he regarded not the degree of interest felt by his audience in the topics which deeply occupied himself; and seldom knew when he had said enough on those which affected them as well as him. He was admirable in exposition; in truth, he delighted to give instruction both when speaking and conversing, and in this he was unrivalled. ‘*Quis in sententiis argutior? in docendo edisserendoque subtilior?*’ Mr. Fox might well avow, without a compliment, that he had learnt more from him alone than from all other men and authors. But if any one thing is proved by unvarying experience of popular assemblies, it is, that an excellent dissertation makes a very bad speech. The speaker is not the only person actively engaged while a great oration is pronouncing; the audience have their

share ; they must be excited, and for this purpose constantly appealed to as recognised persons of the drama. The didactic orator (if, as has been said of the poet, it be not a contradiction in terms) has it all to himself ; the hearer is merely passive ; and the consequence is, he soon ceases to be a listener, and if he can, even to be a spectator. Mr. Burke was essentially didactic, except when the violence of his invective carried him away, and then he offended the correct taste of the House of Commons, by going beyond the occasion, and by descending to coarseness.* When he argued, it was by unfolding large views, and seizing upon analogies too remote, and drawing distinctions ‘ too fine for hearers,’ or, at the best, by a body of statements, lucid, certainly, and diversified with flower and fruit, and lighted up with pleasantry, but almost always in excess, and overdone in these qualities as well as in its own substance. He had little power of hard stringent reasoning, as we have more than once remarked ; and his declamation was addressed to the head, as from the head it proceeded, learned, fanciful, ingenious, but not impassioned. Of him, as a combatant, we may say what Aristotle did of the old philosophers, when he compared them to unskilful boxers, who hit round about, and not straight forward, and fight with little effect, though they may by chance sometimes deal a hard blow.—Οἷον ἐν ταῖς μαχαῖς ὅι ἀγυμναστοὶ πεινοῦσι. καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοὶ περὶ φέρουμενοὶ τυπτοῦσι πολλὰ καὶ καλὰς πληγὰς· ἀλλ’ οὐτ’ ἐκεῖνοὶ ἀπ’ ἐπιστήμης.—(*Metaphys*)†

Cicero has somewhere called Eloquence *copiose loquens sapientia*. This may be true of written, but of spoken eloquence it is a defective definition, and will, at the best, only comprehend the Demonstrative (or Epideictic) kind, which is banished, for want of an audience, from all modern assemblies of a secular description. Thus, though it well characterises Mr. Burke, yet the defects which we have pointed out, were fatal to his success. Accordingly the test of eloquence, which the same master has in so picturesque a manner given, from his own constant experience, here entirely failed.—‘ Volo hoc oratori contingat, ‘ ut cum auditum sit eum esse dicturum, locus in subselliis occupetur, ‘ compleatur tribunal, gratiosi scribæ sint in dando et cedendo locum, ‘ corona multiplex, judex erectus ; cum surgit is, qui dicturus sit,

* The charge of coarseness, or rather of vulgarity of language, has, to the astonishment of all who knew him, and understood pure idiomatic English, been made against Mr. Windham, but only by persons unacquainted with both. To him might nearly be applied the beautiful sketch of Crassus by M. Tullius—‘ Quo,’ says he, ‘ nihil statuo fieri potuisse perfectius. Erat summa gravitas, erat ‘ cum gravitate junctus, facetiarum et urbanitatis oratorius, non scurrilis lepos. ‘ Latine loquendi accurata, et sine molestiâ diligens elegantia—in disserendo ‘ mira explicatio ; cum de jure civili, cum de æquo et bono disputaretur argumentorum et similitudinum copia.’ Let not the reader reject even the latter features, those certainly of an advocate ; at least let him first read Mr. W.’s Speech on the Law of Evidence, in the Duke of York’s case.

† The Attic reader will be here reminded of the First Philippic, in which a very remarkable passage, and in part too applicable to our subject, seems to have been suggested by the passage in the text ; and its great felicity both of apt comparison and of wit, should, with a thousand other passages, have made critics pause before they denied those qualities to the chief of orators. Ωσπερ δὲ οἱ βαρβαροὶ πυκτενοῦσιν, οὕτω πολεμεῖτε φιλιππῶ. καὶ γὰρ ἐκείνων ὁ πληγεὶς αἰ τῆς πληγῆς ἐχεται. καν ἐτερώσε παταξῇ τις, ἐκείσε εἰσιν αἱ χεῖρες. προβαλλεσθαι δ’ ἡ βλεπεῖν ἐναντίον, οὐτ’ οἶδεν, οὐτ’ ἐθέλει, which he proceeds to illustrate by the conduct held respecting the Chersonese, and Thermopylæ.

‘ significetur a corona silentium, deinde crebræ assensiones, multæ
 ‘ admirationes : risus, cum velit ; cum velit, fletus ; ut, qui hæc procul
 ‘ videat, etiamsi quid agatur nesciat, at placere tamen, et in scena
 ‘ Roscium intelligat.’ For many years, that is, between the latter
 part of the American war, and the speeches which he made, neither
 many, nor long, nor in a very usual or regular style, on the French
 Revolution, the very reverse of all this was to be seen and lamented,
 as often as Mr. Burke spoke. The spectator saw no signs of Roscius
 being in action, but rather of the eminent civilian we have already
 spoken of. ‘ Videt ’ (as the same critic has, in another passage, almost
 to the letter described it) ‘ oscitantem judicem, loquentem cum altero,
 ‘ nonnunquam etiam circumferentem, mittentem ad horas ; quæsitorem, ut
 ‘ dimittat, rogantem ;* intelligit, oratorem in ea causa non adesse, qui
 ‘ possit animis judicem admoveere orationem, tanquam fidibus manum.’

But it may justly be said, with the second of Attic orators, that
 sense is always more important than eloquence ; and no one can doubt
 that enlightened men in all ages will hang over the works of Mr. Burke,
 and dwell with delight even upon the speeches that failed to command
 the attention of those to whom they were addressed. Nor is it by
 their rhetorical beauties that they interest us. The extraordinary
 depth of his detached views, the penetrating sagacity which he *occa-*
sionally applies to the affairs of men and their motives, and the curious
 felicity of expression with which he unfolds principles, and traces
 resemblances and relations, are separately the gift of few, and in their
 union probably without any example. This must be admitted on all
 hands ; it is possibly the last of our observations which will obtain
 universal assent, as it is the last we have to offer before coming upon
 disputed ground, where the fierce contentions of politicians cross the
 more quiet path of the critic.

Not content with the praise of his philosophic acuteness, which all
 are ready to allow, the less temperate admirers of this great writer,
 have ascribed to him a gift of genius approaching to the power of
 divination, and have recognised him as in possession of a judgment so
 acute and so calm withal, that its decisions might claim the authority
 of infallible decrees. His opinions have been viewed as always resulting
 from general principles deliberately applied to each emergency ; and
 they have been looked upon as forming a connected system of doc-
 trines, by which his own sentiments and conduct were regulated, and
 from which after times may derive the lessons of practical wisdom.

A consideration which at once occurs, as casting suspicion upon the
 soundness, if not also upon the sincerity, of these encomiums, is, that
 they never were dreamt of until the questions arose concerning the
 French Revolution ; and yet, if well founded, they were due to the
 former principles and conduct of their object ; for it is wholly incon-
 sistent with their tenor to admit that the doctrines so extolled were
 the rank and sudden growth of the heats which the changes of 1789
 had generated. Their title to so much admiration and to our implicit
 confidence, must depend upon their being the slowly matured fruit of
 a profound philosophy, which had investigated and compared ; pursuing
 the analogies of things, and tracing events to their remote origin in the

* This desire in the English senate is irregularly signified, by the cries of
 ‘ Question,’ there not being a proper quarter to appeal to, as in the Roman
 courts.

principles of human nature. Yet it is certain that these reasoners (if reasoning can indeed be deemed their vocation) never discovered a single merit in Mr. Burke's opinions, or anything to praise, or even to endure, in his conduct, from his entrance into public life in 1765, to the period of that stormy confusion of all parties and all political attachments, which took place in 1791, a short time before he quitted it. They are therefore placed in a dilemma, from which it would puzzle subtler dialecticians to escape. Either they or their idol have changed; either they have received a new light, or he is a changeling god. They are either converts to a faith, which, for so many years, and during so many vicissitudes, they had, in their preaching and in their lives, held to be damnable; or they are believers in a heresy, lightly taken up by its author, and promulgated to suit the wholly secular purposes of some particular season.

We believe a very little examination of the facts will suffice to show, that the believers have been more consistent than their oracle; and that they escape from the charge of fickleness, at the expense of the authority due to the faith last proclaimed from his altar. It would, indeed, be difficult to select one leading principle or prevailing sentiment in Mr. Burke's latest writings, to which something extremely adverse may not be found in his former, we can hardly say his early works;—excepting only the subject of Parliamentary Reform, to which, with all the friends of Lord Rockingham, he was from the beginning adverse; and in favour of which he found so very hesitating and lukewarm a feeling among Mr. Fox's supporters, as hardly amounted to a difference, certainly offered no inducements to compromise the opinions of his own party. Searching after the monuments of altered principles, we will not resort to his first works—in one of which he terms Damien 'a late *unfortunate* regicide,' looking only at his punishment, and disregarding his offence; neither shall we look into his speeches, exceeding, as they did, the bounds which all other men, even in the heat of debate, prescribe to themselves, in speaking now of the first magistrate of the country, while labouring under a calamitous visitation of Providence—now of kings generally. But we may fairly take as the standard of his opinions, best weighed and most deliberately pronounced, the calmest of all his productions, and the most fully considered,—given to the world when he had long passed the middle age of life, had filled a high station, and been for years eminent in parliamentary history.* Although, in compositions of this kind, more depends upon the general tone of a work, than on particular passages, because the temper of mind on certain points may be better gathered from that, than from any expressly stated propositions, yet we have but to open the book to see that his *Thoughts* in 1770, were very different from those which breathe through every page of his Anti-Jacobin writings. And first of the Corinthian Capital of 1790. 'I am no 'friend' (says he in 1770) 'to aristocracy, in the sense at least in 'which that word is usually understood. If it were not a bad habit 'to moot cases on the supposed ruin of the constitution, I should be 'free to declare, that if it must perish, I would rather by far see it 'resolved into any other form, than lost in that austere and insolent 'domination.' (*Works*, ii. 246.) His comfort is derived from the

* The *Thoughts on the Causes of the present Discontents* was published in 1770—when Mr. B. was above 40 years old.

consideration ‘ that the generality of peers are but too apt to fall into ‘ an oblivion of their proper dignity, and run headlong into an abject ‘ servitude.’ Next of ‘ the Swinish Multitude ’—‘ When popular dis- ‘ contents have been very prevalent, it may well be affirmed and ‘ supported, that there has been generally something found amiss in ‘ the constitution, or in the conduct of government. The people ‘ have no interest in disorder. When they do wrong, it is their error, ‘ not their crime. But with the governing part of the state it is far ‘ otherwise,’ — and he quotes the saying of Sully — ‘ Pour la populace ‘ ce n’est jamais par envie d’attaquer qu’elle se souleve, mais par ‘ impatience de souffrir.’ (*Ib.* 224.) Again, of the people as ‘ having ‘ nothing to do with the laws but to obey them ’—‘ I see no other ‘ way for the preservation of a decent attention to public interest in ‘ the representatives, but *the interposition of the body of the people itself*,* ‘ whenever it shall appear by some flagrant and notorious act, — by ‘ some capital innovation — that these representatives are going to ‘ overleap the fences of the law, and to introduce an arbitrary power. ‘ This interposition is a most unpleasant remedy. But if it be a legal ‘ remedy, it is intended on some occasion to be used—to be used then ‘ only when it is evident that nothing else can hold the constitution to ‘ its true principles. It is not in Parliament alone that the remedy ‘ for parliamentary disorders can be completed; hardly indeed can it ‘ begin there. Until a confidence in government is re-established, the ‘ people ought to be excited to a more strict and detailed attention to ‘ the conduct of their representatives. Standards for judging more ‘ systematically upon their conduct ought to be settled in the meetings ‘ of counties and corporations. Frequent and correct lists of the ‘ voters in all important questions ought to be procured.’ (*Ib.* 324.) The reasons which call for popular interposition, and made him preach it at a season of unprecedented popular excitement, are stated to be ‘ the immense revenue, enormous debt, and mighty establishments;’ and he requires the House of Commons ‘ to bear some stamp of the ‘ actual disposition of the people at large;’ adding, that ‘ it would be ‘ a more natural and tolerable evil, that the House should be infected ‘ with every epidemical frenzy of the people, as this would indicate ‘ some consanguinity, some sympathy of nature with their constituents, ‘ than that they should in all cases be wholly untouched by the ‘ opinions and feelings of the people out of doors.’ Now let us step aside for a moment to remark, that the ‘ *immense revenue* ’ was under 10 millions; the ‘ *enormous debt* ’ 130; and the ‘ *mighty establishments* ’ cost about 6 millions a-year. The statesman who, on this account, recommended popular interference in 1770, lived to see the revenue 24 millions; the debt, 350; the establishment, 30; and the ruling principle of his latter days operating with the vehemence of a passion, was the all-sufficiency of Parliament and the Crown, and the fatal consequence of according to the people any the slightest share of direct power in the state.

His theoretical view of the constitution in those days, was as different from the high monarchical tone of his latter writings. The King was then ‘ the representative of the people,’—‘ so’ (he adds) ‘ are the ‘ Lords — so are the Judges; they are all trustees for the people, as ‘ well as the Commons, because no power is given for the sole sake of

* Ital. in orig.

‘ the holder ; and although government certainly is an institution of
 ‘ divine authority, yet its forms, and the persons who administer it, all
 ‘ originate from the people.’ And then comes that immortal passage
 so often cited, and which ought to be blazoned in letters of fire over
 the porch of the Commons House ; illustrating the doctrine it sets out
 with, that ‘ their representatives are a control *for* the people, and not
 ‘ *upon* the people ; and that the virtue, spirit, and essence of a House
 ‘ of Commons consists in its being the express image of the feelings
 ‘ of the nation.’ (*Ibid.* 288.)* It may be superfluous to add, that
 one so deeply imbued with the soundest principles of a free constitu-
 tion, must always have regarded the Bourbon rulers with singular
 dislike, while he saw in the English government the natural ally of
 Liberty, wheresoever she was struggling with her chains. Accord-
 ingly, in the same famous work, he exclaims, ‘ Such was the conquest
 ‘ of Corsica, by the professed enemies of the freedom of mankind,
 ‘ in defiance of those who were formerly its professed defenders.’
 (*Ibid.* 272.)

Although it cannot be denied that a considerable portion of the
 deference which Mr. Burke’s later and more celebrated opinions are
 entitled to command, is thus taken away, and, as it were, shared by
 the conflicting authority of his earlier sentiments, his disciples may,
 nevertheless, be willing to rest his claims to a reverent, if not an
 implicit observance, upon the last, as the maturest efforts of his genius.
 Now, it appears to us, that in this extraordinary person the usual
 progress of the faculties in growth and decline, was in some measure
 reversed ; his fancy became more vivid,—it burnt, as it were, brighter
 before its extinction ; while age, which had only increased that light,
 lessened the power of profiting from it, by weakening the judgment
 as the imagination gained luxuriance and strength. Thus his old age
 resembled that of other men in one particular only ; he was more
 haunted by fears, and more easily became the dupe of imposture as
 well as alarm.

It is, we apprehend, quite vain now to deny, that the unfavourable
 decision which those feelings led him to form of the French Revolu-
 tion, was, in the main, incorrect and exaggerated. That he was
 right in expecting much confusion and mischief from the passions of
 a whole nation let loose, and influenced only by the various mobs of
 its capital, literary and political, in the assemblies, the club-rooms, the
 theatre, and the streets, no one can doubt ; nor was he at all singular
 in the apprehensions he felt. But beyond this very scanty, and not
 very difficult portion of his predictions, it would be hard to show any

* ‘ A vigilant and jealous eye over executory and judicial magistracy ; an
 ‘ anxious care of public money ; an openness approaching towards facility, to
 ‘ public complaint ; these seem to be the true characteristics of a House of
 ‘ Commons. But an addressing House of Commons and a petitioning nation ;
 ‘ a House of Commons full of confidence, when the nation is plunged in despair ;
 ‘ in the utmost harmony with ministers whom the people regard with the utmost
 ‘ abhorrence ; who vote thanks, when the public opinion calls upon them for
 ‘ impeachments ; who are eager to grant, when the general voice demands
 ‘ account ; who, in all disputes between the people and the administration,
 ‘ pronounce against the people ; who punish their disorders, but refuse even to
 ‘ inquire into the provocations to them ; this is an unnatural, a monstrous state
 ‘ of things in the constitution. Such an assembly may be a great, wise, awful
 ‘ senate ; but it is not to any popular purpose a House of Commons.’ (*Ib.* 289.)

signal instance of their fulfilment. Except in lamenting the excesses of the times of terror, and in admitting them to form a large deduction from the estimate of the benefits of the revolution, it would be no easy matter to point out a single opinion of his which any rational and moderate man of the present day will avow. Those who claim for Mr. Burke's doctrines in 1790, the praise of a sagacity and foresight hardly human, would do well to recollect his speech on the Army Estimates of that year. It is published by himself, corrected*, and its drift is to show the uselessness of a large force, because 'France ' must now be considered as expunged out of the system of Europe;' it expresses much doubt if she can ever resume her station 'as a ' leading power;' anticipates 'the language of the rising generation — ' *Gallos quoque in bellis floruisse audivimus;* and decides, that at all events her restoration to anything like a substantive existence, must, under a republic, be the work of 'much time.' Scarce two years elapsed before this same France, without any change whatever in her situation, except the increase of the anarchy that had expunged her from the map, declared war on Austria, and in a few months more carried her conquests so much further than Louis XIV. had done, when the firmness and judgment of King William opposed him, that Mr. Burke now said a universal league was necessary to avert her universal dominion, and that it was a question whether she would suffer any one throne to stand in Europe. The same eulogists of Mr. Burke's sagacity would also do well to recollect those yearly predictions of the complete internal ruin which for so long a period alternated with alarms at the foreign aggrandisement of the Republic; they all originated in his famous work — though it contains some prophecies too extravagant to be borrowed by his most servile imitators. Thus he contends that the population of France is irreparably diminished by the revolution, and actually adopts a calculation which makes the distress of Paris require above two millions sterling for its yearly relief; a sum sufficient to pay each family above seventeen pounds, or to defray its whole expenditure in that country. Surely one so easily led away by his prejudices, can in no sense be reckoned a safe guide, or be extolled for more than ordinary sagacity.

But on these grounds a further allowance is made, and a new deduction introduced, from the sum total of the deference paid to his authority. It is said that the sagacity and penetration which we are bid to reverence, were never at fault, unless on points where strong feelings interfered. The proposition must be admitted, and without any qualification. But it leads not to an abatement merely — it operates a release of the whole debt of deference and respect. For one clever man's opinion is just as good as another's, if both are equally uninfluenced by passions and feelings of every kind. Nor was it only on the French Revolution that Mr. Burke's prejudices warped his judgment. Whatever subject interested him strongly, he regarded generally in false colours and distorted shape; always in exaggerated dimensions. The fate of society, for many years, hung upon Hastings's Impeachment; during that period he exhausted as much vituperation upon the East Indians in this country, as he afterwards did on the Jacobins; and he was not more ready to quarrel with Mr. Fox on a difference of opinion about France, than he had been a year before to attack

* Works.—Vol. v. page 1.

Mr. Erskine with every weapon of personal and professional abuse, upon a slighter difference about the Abating of the Impeachment. Nay, after the Hastings question might have been supposed forgotten, or merged in the more recent controversy on French affairs, he deliberately enumerates, among the causes of alarm at French principles, the prevalence of the East India interest in England; ranks 'Nabobs' with the diplomatic body all over Europe, as naturally and incurably Jacobin; and warns this country loudly and solemnly against suffering itself to be overthrown by a 'Bengal junto.'

The like infirmity of a judgment weakened, no doubt, by his temper, pursues him through the whole details of every question that excites him, that is, of every question that engages his attention. But it is most conspicuous, of course, in all that relates to France, because France was the master topic. He is blinded to the impressions on his very senses, not by the 'light shining inward,' but by the heat of his passions. He sees not what all other men behold, but what he wishes to see, or what his prejudices and fantasies suggest; and having once pronounced a dogma, the most astounding contradictions that events can give him, assail his mind, and even his senses, in vain. Early in 1790 he pronounced France extinguished, as regarded her external force. But at the end of 1793, when the second attempt to invade her had ended in the utter discomfiture of the assailants, when she was rioting in the successes of an offensive war, and had armed her whole people to threaten the liberties of Europe, he still sees in her situation nothing but 'complete ruin, without the chance of resurrection,' and still reckons, that when she recovers her nominal existence by a restoration of the monarchy, 'it will be as much as all her neighbours 'can do, by a steady guarantee, to keep her upon her basis.'* (Works, vii. 185.) That he should confound all persons, as well as things, in his extravagant speculations, surprises less than such delusions as this. We are little astonished at finding him repeatedly class the humane and chivalrous La Fayette with the monster Robespierre; but when we find him pursuing his theory, that all Atheists are Jacobins, so far as to charge Hume with being a leveller, and pressing the converse of the proposition, so far as to insinuate that Priestley was an Atheist, we pause incredulous, over the sad devastation which a disordered fancy can make in the finest understanding.—(vii. 58.)

That the warlike policy which he recommended against France, was more consistent than the course pursued by the ministry, may be admitted. The weak and ruinous plan of leaving the enemy to conquer all Europe, while we wasted our treasure and our blood in taking sugar islands, to increase the African Slave Trade, and mow down whole armies by pestilence, has been oftentimes painted in strong colours, never stronger than the truth; and our arms only were successful when this wretched system was abandoned. But if Mr. Burke faintly and darkly arraigned this plan of operations, it was on grounds so purely fanciful, and he dashed the truth with such a mixture of manifest error, that he unavoidably both prevented his councils from being respected, and subjected his own policy to imputations full as serious as those he brought against the Government. He highly approved of the emigration, because France was no longer in but out of

* She had at that time 750,000 men under arms, without calling out the second conscription.

France; he insisted on an invasion, for the avowed purpose of restoring monarchy and punishing its enemies; he required the advanced-guard of the attacking army to be composed of the bands of French gentlemen, emigrants, and to be accompanied by the exiled priests; and, in order to make the movement more popular, they were to be preceded by the proclamation of solemn leagues among the allies, never to treat with a republic that had slain its king, and formal announcements that they entered the country to punish and to restore.

Mr. Burke lived not to see the power of the revolutionary government extend itself resistless in the direction he had pronounced impossible, or prove harmless in the only way he deemed it formidable. The downfall of that government he lived not to see thrice accomplished, without one of his plans being followed. Yet let us not doubt his opinions upon the restoration of his favourite dynasty, had he survived its exile. With all his bright genius and solid learning, his venerable name would have been found at the head, or rather say in advance, of the most universally and most justly condemned faction in the world: The '*Ultras*' would have owned him for their leader, and would have admitted that he went beyond them in the uncompromising consistency of his extravagant dogmas. He who had deemed the kind of punishments that should be meted out, the most important point to settle previously, and had thought it necessary, in many a long and laboured page, to discuss this when the prospects of the Bourbons were desperate, (vii. 187,) and to guard them by all arguments against listening to plans of amnesty, would have objected vehemently to every one act of the restored government; regarded the *charter* as an act of abdication; the security of property as robbery and sacrilege; the impunity of the Jacobins, as making the monarch an accessory after the fact to his brother's murder; and what all men of sound minds regarded as a state of great improvement, blessing the country with much happiness, freeing it from many abuses, and giving it precious hopes of liberty, he would have pronounced the height of misery and degradation. If such had not proved to be his views, living in our times, he must have changed all the opinions which he professed up to the hour of his death.

Upon one subject alone could he have been found ranged with the Liberal party of the present day; he always, from a very early period, and before sound principles were disseminated on questions of political economy, held the most enlightened opinions on all subjects of mercantile policy. Here his mind seemed warped by no bias, and his profound understanding and habits of observation led him right. His works abound with just and original reflections upon these matters, and they form a striking contrast to the narrow views which, in his latter years, he was prone to take of all that touched the interests and the improvement of mankind. For his whole habits of thinking seemed perverted by the dread of change; and he never reflected, except in the single case of the Irish Catholics, that the surest way of bringing about a violent revolution, is to resist a peaceful reform.

As he dreaded all plans of amendment which sought to work by perceivable agency, and within a moderate compass of time, so he distrusted all who patronized them — asserting their conduct to be wild and visionary enthusiasm at the best, but generally imputing their zeal to some sinister motives of personal interest. Most unjustly — most unphilosophically — most unthinkingly — it is the natural

tendency of men connected with the upper ranks of society, and separated from the mass of the community, to undervalue things which only affect the rights or the interests of the people. Against this leaning to which he had yielded, it becomes them to struggle, and their honest devotion to the cause of peaceable improvement, their virtuous labours bestowed in advancing the dignity and happiness of their fellow-creatures, their perils and their losses encountered in defence of the rights of oppressed men, are the most glorious titles to the veneration of the good and the wise — but they are titles which he would have scornfully rejected, or covered with the tide of his indignant sarcasm, whom Providence had endowed with such rare parts, and originally imbued with such love of liberty, that he seemed especially raised up as an instrument for instructing and mending his kind.

In the imperfect estimate of this great man's character and genius, which we have now concluded, let it not be thought that we have made any very large exceptions to the praise unquestionably his due. We have only abated claims preferred by his unheeding worshippers to more than mortal endowments. Enough will remain to command our admiration, after it shall be admitted that he who possessed the finest fancy, and the rarest knowledge, did not equally excel other men in sound and calm judgment; enough to excite our wonder at the degree in which he was gifted with most parts of genius, though our credulity be not staggered by the assertion of a miraculous union of them all. We have been contemplating a great marvel certainly, not gazing on a supernatural sight; and we retire from it with the belief, that, if acuteness, learning, imagination so unmeasured, were never before combined, yet have there been occasionally witnessed, in eminent men, greater powers of close reasoning and fervid declamation, oftentimes a more correct taste, for the most part a safer judgment.*

DEMOSTHENES.†

WITHOUT any ostentation of profound reflection or philosophical remark — with few attempts at generalization — without the glare and attraction of prominent ornaments — with extremely few, and those not very successful, instances of the tender and pathetic — with a considerable degree of coarseness, and what we should call vulgarity, particularly in his great oration — and, absolutely, without any pretension to wit or humour, to have acquired the reputation of the Greatest Orator whom the world has ever produced, is a peculiarity which belongs to the character of Demosthenes. In no other instance,

* In the Review of *Coleridge's Biographia Literaria*, Vol. xxviii. page 503. there is a well-written sketch of the character of Edmund Burke. It is no violation of confidence to state that it was the production of the late Mr. Hazlitt, as it has been since reprinted in the miscellaneous works of that clever and ill-appreciated author.

† Œuvres complètes de Demosthène et d'Eschine, en Grec et en Français. Traduction de l'Abbé Auger, de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres de Paris. Nouvelle édition. Revue et corrigée par J. Planche, Professeur de Rhétorique au Collège Royal de Bourbon. Paris, année 1819. — Vol. xxxiii. page 226. January, 1820.

in the whole range and circle of the Fine Arts, is the same ascendancy admitted with the same degree of unanimity. ‘Of the three Poets’, for instance, ‘in three distant ages born,’ what critic has ever pretended, with any success at least, to class and place them in their due rank and order of merit? Is it not notorious, that, with one reader, the vigour and freshness of the father of poetry have superior charms; with another, the delicacy of taste and passion preeminent in the Roman poet; and, with a third, the learned copiousness of our own countryman? Not to mention the partisans of Dante, of Tasso, and of Ariosto, who severally contest, for these distinguished Italians, the point of precedence with the three, most usually admitted, Princes of Epic Poetry. To the Tragedians of antiquity, the same observation applies. The gorgeous declamation of Æschylus, the passionate eloquence of Euripides, and the measured stateliness of Sophocles, attract to each their several admirers and advocates, without being able to procure an admitted superiority. The same thing may be said of the Greek and Roman, and (if there be any who do not shrink from the comparison) of the modern Historians also. Nobody affects to say which is *the best*. — To take one instance more. — In a case, in which, amongst every description of readers in this kingdom, learned and unlearned, there is a more perfect (and we doubt not, in the main, just) agreement, than upon any other subject of criticism whatever, — we mean the almost universally prevalent opinion of the unrivalled excellence of our own Shakspeare — is not this very preference of the Poet of Nature considered, by our fastidious neighbours, as a decisive proof of the remains of barbarism, — the ‘*vestigia ruris*’ amongst us? To Demosthenes alone, in that faculty which is common to the whole species, and one of its highest distinctions, and in which all mankind must have been, in some degree, his competitors, is the palm conceded by (nearly) the unanimous consent of ancient and modern times.

It is not our intention to do more than make extracts sparingly from the many things which have been written upon this subject; but we shall notice some of the most remarkable. The opinion delivered by Hume (in which he has been implicitly followed by Dr. Blair) in his celebrated Essay upon Eloquence, is, of course, familiar to our readers.

By no other writer, not merely has a more decisive judgment been pronounced in favour of Demosthenes, but by none are the peculiar qualities and distinguishing properties of his style more vigorously and happily, though briefly, portrayed, than by this most acute and ingenious Critic. After remarking that his manner is more chaste and austere than that of Cicero, he proceeds thus — ‘Could it be copied, its success would be infallible over a modern assembly. It is rapid harmony exactly adjusted to the sense: It is vehement reasoning without any appearance of art: It is disdain, anger, boldness, freedom, involved in a continued stream of argument: And, of all human productions, the Orations of Demosthenes present to us the models which approach the nearest to perfection.’ How well this agrees with the testimonials of antiquity, we shall see hereafter; for the present we shall only remark, that this commendation of Demosthenes is in a style of decision, and even of animation, very different from the balancing and cautious system habitually adopted by our reserved and dispassionate countryman. It is manifest he must have felt very strongly, before he would have expressed himself so warmly.

Longinus is, obviously, a writer for *effect*. The different authors, who

are the subjects of his criticism, are, in truth, little more than instruments for forwarding his principal purpose, which is to let his readers see what he himself can do in the sublime. In his often quoted, and, we suppose we must add, celebrated description of the Greek and Roman orators, for instance, in which he is pleased to compare the one to a thunderbolt, and the other to a conflagration,—what precise idea of their particular qualities can be collected—what distinct or individual picture of the leading features and characteristics of those great masters is presented to the mind? Apart from the principal purpose of showing off, we believe he might as usefully have compared them to Frost and Snow. This writer, however, in his general criticism upon Demosthenes, after having contrasted him with Hyperides, and, apparently, intimated a pretty strong opinion in favour of the latter, (as to the correctness of which opinion we have no direct means of judging, but as Cicero is against him, we doubt not he is wrong,) concludes with the following laboured and remarkable passage.

Ἀλλ' ἐπειδήπερ, οἱ μᾶϊ, τὰ μὲν θαλίερα καλὰ, καὶ εἰ πολλὰ. "Ὅμως αμειγέδη καὶ καρδίῃ νήφοντος, (Anglicè, '*sober at heart*') ἀργὰ, καὶ τὸν ἀκροατὴν ἡρεμεῖν ἐὼντά, εἰδείς γὰρ ὑπερίδην ἀναγινώσκων φοβεῖται· — Ὁ δὲ ἔνθεν ελὼν ἔξ μεγαλοφρονεστάτου καὶ ἐπ' ἄκρον ἀρετᾶς συντελεσμένης, — ὑψηλοῦς λόγον, ἐμφυχα πάθη, περισσίαν, ἀγχίνοιαν, τάχος, — ἐνθενδ', (ὁ κύριον) τὴν ἀπασιν ἀπερόσιτον δεινότητά καὶ δύναμιν, ἐπειδὴ ταῦτα, φημί, ὥς θεοπεμπία ἵνα δωρήματα (ἔ γὰρ εἰπειν θεμῖδον ἀνδρωπῖνα) ἀθρόα ἐς ἑαυτὸν ἔσπασε, διατέτο, οἷς ἔχει καλοῖς, ἀπαντίας αἰεὶ νικᾷ, καὶ ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔκχε, ὥσπερ καὶ βροχὶ καὶ καὶ ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐκχέει· — καὶ θαῖτον ἂν τις κεραυνὸς φερομένοισι ἀνιανοῖται τὰ θεῖα δύναιτο, ἢ ἀντοφθολμῆσαι τοῖς ἐπαλλήλοισι ἐκείνους παθεσιν.

' Forasmuch, however, as the beauties of the one (Hyperides) although numerous, are not great in their kind,—are the productions of a person of no excitement,—are inefficient, and such as permit the hearer to remain unmoved, no one, for this reason, who reads Hyperides, is impassioned. But the other (D.) having acquired qualities of the highest order, and improved them to the highest pitch of perfection,—a tone of sublimity,—heart-felt passion,—a richness and copiousness of style,—justness of conception,—rapidity, and, in addition to these,—that which is his peculiar characteristic, a force and power which none have ever approached;—having, I say, appropriated to himself in abundance these, which ought rather to be deemed gifts vouchsafed to him from the Gods, than human qualities and excellencies, he thereby always surpasses all competition; and, as a compensation for his defects, he strikes down before him, as if with a thunderbolt, all orators of all times, and consumes them in his blaze. For it would be easier for a man to behold, with undazzled eyes, the lightning flashing upon him, than to contemplate without emotion his successive and various passions.'

Our readers will not fail to remark, (and therefore chiefly the quotation is made) — we do not say what efforts the rhetorician makes,—but into what agonies and convulsions he throws himself to give, if possible, an adequate idea of—what he seems to think, the more than human excellence of this Orator.

Cicero, to whose admirable proficiency and transcendent powers we have done no more than justice upon former occasions, and whose testimony, upon a subject of this nature, is almost conclusive, never speaks of his great predecessor and prototype, except in terms of the most unbounded and unaffected admiration.—'It is perfectly astonish-

ing,' says he, 'how much Demosthenes is superior to all the Grecian orators.'—In Græcis verò oratoribus quidè̃m admirabile est, quantum inter omnes unus excellat.' Orat.—Upon another occasion, he thus expresses himself. 'Demosthenes you may, without difficulty, pronounce to be absolutely perfect, and deficient in no particular.'—* 'Planè̃ quidè̃m perfectum, et cui nihil admodum desit, Demosthenem facilè̃ dixeris.'—Not Plato more copious, not Lysias more simple, not Isocrates more finished, not Hyperides more acute,—not Athens itself more Attic.—† 'Ne Athenas quidè̃m ipsas magis credo fuisse Atticas.' Practically, and judging by experience, and with reference to any thing which had existed, he pronounces him, as we have seen, absolutely perfect, and declares 'that what he (Cicero) was attempting, Demosthenes had achieved.'—† 'Vides perfectò̃ illum multa perficere, —nos multa conari;—illum posse, nos velle quocunque modo Causa postulet, dicere.' Upon one occasion, he goes farther, and declares, as a reason for his preference, 'that Demosthenes had formed himself upon a model of imaginary excellence, and not of what had been known to exist in any person.'—† 'Recordor me longè̃ omnibus unum anteferre Demosthenem, qui vim accommodaret ad eam, quam *sentiam*, Eloquentiam, non ad eam quam in aliquo *esse* agnoverim.' Elsewhere, he does indeed complain, and it is with a sort of apology for his own unreasonableness,—'that he is so severe a critic, and so difficult to be pleased, as not even to be satisfied by Demosthenes himself; who, though he admits him 'to be above all competition in every species of oratory, did not, as it seems, always *fill* his ears;—so greedy and capacious were they, and always longing after something immense and infinite.'—'Tantùm abest ut nostra miremur, ut usque eò̃ difficiles ac morosi sumus, ut nobis non satisficiat ipse Demosthenes; qui quamquam unus emineat in omni genere dicendi, tamen non semper *implet* aures meas: ità sunt *avidæ* et capaces, et semper aliquod immensum infinitumq. desiderant.'† It seems then that this wonderful man, by his unwearied diligence,—his everlasting application to one single object,—by constant reflexion and endless efforts,—in the Senate,—in the Forum,—at Athens,—at Tusculum, had been able to frame to himself, with difficulty nevertheless, a possible excellence,—an imaginary perfection,—a beau ideal, beyond the performances even of Demosthenes.—Just as no degree of dignity or of loveliness can be supposed to exist, beyond which art may not be supposed to reach; (the Olympian Jupiter was, we are told, a sort of concentrated Majesty, —and the Coan Venus a quintessence of Beauty);—or as in Geometry, no point, however remote, can be assigned, beyond which another may not be assumed in the vast and boundless regions of absolute space.

To Dionysius of Halicarnassus we refer the more willingly; because, though inferior to none in powers of composition himself, or of forming a judgment on others, he is, for some reason or other, less known and admired than he deserves. This distinguished Critic, as many of our readers are aware, commences his Treatise on 'The Oratorical Power of Demosthenes,' with a general definition of style, of which he (as does Cicero) makes three kinds: which are usually called, the Austere, the Florid, and the Middle. Having discussed the general subject, he proceeds to examine, with much acuteness and sagacity, the respective properties and merits of Lysias, Thucydides, Isocrates, and

* De Cl. Orat.

† Orat.

Plato. He then comes to Demosthenes, on whose account, he observes, the preliminary observations and criticisms had been introduced, and begins his notice of him by the following (to us, at least, we know not what M. Planche may think,) untranslatable passage :

Τοιαύτην δὴ καταλαβὼν τὴν πολιτικὴν λέξιν ὁ Δημοσθένης, ἔτω κεκνημένην ποικίλως, καὶ ἡλικίοις ἐπεισελθὼν ἀνδράσιν, ἑνὸς ἕθενος ἤξιωσε γενέσθαι ζηλωτῆς, ἔτε χαρρακλήρος, ἔτε ἀνδρός· ἡμίεργος τινὰς ἀπαντῆας οἰόμενος εἶναι καὶ ἀγέλεις· ἐξ ἀπάντων δ' αὐτῶν ὅσα κράτιστα καὶ χρησιμώτατα ἦν, ἐκλεγομένους, συνύφαινε, καὶ μίαν ἐκ πολλῶν δικάλεκτον ἀπέειλε, — μεγαλοπρεπῆ, λιγὴν — περιττὴν, ἀπέριττον· — ἐξηλλαγμένην, συνήθη· — πανηγυρικὴν, ἀληθινήν· — αὐστηράν, ἱλαράν· — σύνλογον, ἀνημένην· — ἠδέϊαν, πικράν· — ἠθικὴν, παθητικὴν· ἐδὲν διαλλάττεσσαν τῷ μεμυθευμένῃ παρὰ τοῖς ἀρχαίοις ποιηταῖς Πρωτέως· ὃς ἀπασαν ἰδέαν μορφῆς ἀμογητὴ μετέλαμβανεν· εἴτε θεὸς ἢ δαίμων τὸς ἐκείνος ἄρα ἦν, παρρακρόμενος ὅφεις τὰς ἀνθρωπίνους· εἴτε διαλέκτη ποικίλον δὴ χρῆμα ἐν ἀνδρὶ σοφῷ, πάσης ἀπαλήθων ἀκοῆς· ὃ μᾶλλον ἢ εἰκάσειεν. Ἐγὼ μὲν τοιαύτην τινὰ δόξαν ὑπὲρ τῆς Δημοσθένους λέξεως χω, καὶ τ' χαρρακλήρα τῆτον ἀποδίδωμι αὐτῷ, τ' ἐξ ἀπάσης μικρὸν ἰδέας.*

‘ Demosthenes, then, finding the art of public speaking in this
‘ state, — so skilfully improved, and coming, as he did, after men of
‘ such excellence, did not condescend to become an imitator of any
‘ one style or person, — conceiving them all to be *half-artists* and in-
‘ complete; — but, selecting from all whatever was the best and the
‘ most useful in each, he combined and, out of the many, made up a
‘ species of composition, — sublime, yet simple, — redundant, yet con-
‘ cise, — refined, yet idiomatic, — declamatory, yet natural, — austere,
‘ yet lively, — nervous, yet flowing, — soft, yet pungent, — temperate,
‘ yet passionate, — differing, in no respect, from Proteus, celebrated
‘ by the poets of old for being able to assume, without effort, every
‘ kind of shape; — whether he was some God or Dæmon who deceived
‘ the vision of mankind, or, as one would rather guess, some gifted
‘ person, accomplished in the power of speech, by which he imposed
‘ upon the senses of every hearer. Some such notion have I of the
‘ oratory of Demosthenes; and this description I give of it, that it is
‘ composed of every species.’

In another part, he selects a passage (and a very beautiful one) from the Funeral Oration of Plato, and then one from that part of the Oration for the Crown, which includes the celebrated Apostrophe, and places them side by side. He then proceeds thus, —

‘ There is surely no one, who has even a moderate skill in com-
‘ position, and is not determined to wrangle and dispute, who must
‘ not readily admit, that the latter specimen as much exceeds the
‘ former, as the arms of warfare are superior to those which are used
‘ in Shows and Spectacles, — as real figures to shadows, — or, as the
‘ bodies of men trained up in air and exercise are to those which have
‘ been rocked and dandled in confinement and luxury.’

Οὐδεὶς ἐστὶν ὅς οὐχ ὁμολογήσῃεν εἰ μόνον ἔχοι μελίαν αἰσθησθὲν περὶ λόγους, καὶ μήτε βάσκανος, ἢ μήτε δύσερὶς τις, ἔτω διαφέρειν τὴν ἀρίστως παραλεγεῖσσαν λέξιν τῆς περὶ τῆς βασιλείας, ὅσω διαλλάττει πολέμους ἡμέρας μὲν ὅπλα πομπευτήρων, ἀληθινὰ δὲ ὅφεις εἰδῶλων, ἐν ἡλίῳ δὲ καὶ πόντοις τετραμμένα σώματα τῶν σκιῶν καὶ ρατῶνας διωκόντων.†

The preference here given, our readers will observe, is over no less a writer than the one, of whom it has been said, that if the Gods spoke Greek, which, if we had any faith in the Polytheism of antiquity, we should believe they did, — without doubt Jupiter would adopt his

* Dion. Hal. Vol. ii. page 273. Oxford Edition. Fol.

† Ibid. 298.

style. Again, (and it shall be our last extract,) after saying, that when he reads Isocrates he feels himself in a composed and tranquil state, not unlike that which is induced by soft music, he goes on thus :

“Ὅταν δὲ Δημοσθένες ἵνα λάβω λόγων, ἐνθουσιῶ τε, καὶ δεῦρο καὶ κείσε ἄγομαι, πάθος ἕτερον ἐξ ἑτέρου μεταλαμβάνων. — ἀπιστῶν, ἀγωνιῶν, δεδιώς, καλίσφρονων, μισῶν, ἐλεῶν, εὐνοῶν, ὀργιζομένου, φθονῶν, — ἅπαντα γὰρ πάθη μεταλαμβάνων, ὅσα κρατεῖν ἀνδρωπίνης γνῶμης.*

‘ But when I take up one of the orations of Demosthenes, I am wrought up to a pitch of enthusiasm, and am hurried backwards and forwards, and assume one passion after another,—distrusting,—labouring,—fearing,—despising,—hating,—now moved with compassion, now with good-will,—sometimes with anger, and sometimes with envy,—taking up, in succession, every passion that sways the human breast.’

We cannot go farther. Our readers will, at once, recognize in the description which this admirable writer, who is worthy of being a Commentator on Demosthenes, gives of his own hurried and varied emotions, the very effects which Cicero, in his glowing panegyric upon Eloquence, ascribes to the power of speech. Dionysius concludes by asking, if, at such a distance of time from the transactions themselves, when all interest has long ago subsided, such marvellous impressions are made by the bare perusal,—What must have been the effect upon the contemporary Athenians and strangers who flocked to hear the Orator defend his own and his country’s cause,—and that, too, with a force and energy of action which is admitted to have been foremost, if possible, amidst his numerous and transcendent qualifications? † — ‘ What,’ said Æschines to the Rhodians, applauding the recital of the speech which caused his banishment,—‘ What if you had heard *the monster* himself?’ τί δὲ, εἰ αὐτῷ τῷ θηρίῳ ἀκηκόειε!

After perusing these testimonials, to which addition might be made at pleasure, from persons of the highest authority,—themselves at once judges and masters of composition, if such ever existed, the first question which suggests itself is,—where are discoverable these astonishing properties,—these dispensations of the Divinity?—In what part of the Speech does the thunderbolt reside? By what peculiar arrangement—by what laborious and artificial structure—by what display of ornament, has the Orator contrived to attract such unbounded and passionate commendation?—To which our classical readers are aware that we must answer, that these praises have been bestowed upon compositions remarkable for simplicity, in the whole of which, we will venture to say, not one single ornament (for its own sake) is to be found; in which there are no splendid patches; where a vulgar appetite for tropes, figures and metaphors (no matter how introduced) must remain unsatisfied;—where, though the composition is so highly wrought, that one of the critics, to whom we have referred, bestows a whole page upon a sentence of a dozen words, to show the delicacy of its structure, and the disorder which would ensue upon the slightest alteration or transposition of any of its parts, yet would no one suppose

* Dion. Hal. Vol. ii. page 288. Oxford Edition. Fol.

† Demosthenem ferunt ei, qui quæsisisset quid primum esset in dicendo,—actionem,—quid secundum, idem,—et idem tertium respondisse. Cic. de Cl. Orat.

that to the mind of Demosthenes was ever present more than one idea,—his subject, and nothing but his subject. Not that we would be supposed as flying in the face of such a body of criticism:—We perfectly agree with it, and are aware that, when apparently unadorned, he is adorned the most; but we notice this general abstemiousness observable in the manner of Demosthenes, not merely as peculiar to his character, but, in some degree, as illustrative of his powers. The less imposing and attractive he is upon a superficial observation, the more of substance must there be to justify such commendations from such judges. The truth is, that this vigour,—this tension,—this sublimity, of which we read so much, is not discoverable in detached parts,—in striking and brilliant passages, but in the effect of the whole. The Spirit and Power and Rapidity, which are so justly celebrated, and which, in the perusal of his Orations, we assuredly perceive and feel, are the Soul, which dwells in no particular part, but which pervades and vivifies the whole Mass.

*Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.*—Æn. vi.

To judge fairly, we must take the whole piece. The ‘ex pede Herculem’—if ever an admissible rule of criticism in the case to which it is applied, which we much doubt, assuredly furnishes no means of judging of the merits of Demosthenes. An attempt to give the effect of any oration by a selection, or the merit of the whole by splendid passages, would be as hopeless as to produce an adequate idea of the bounding elasticity,—the matchless symmetry and ethereal attitude of the entire Apollo, by the production of a finger or an ear.

Some of the smaller Orations of Demosthenes,—and those too, which have contributed not a little to his reputation (the Philippics we mean), might be selected, in which not one ornament (in the ordinary sense of the word) or figure of speech is discoverable. A certain studied temperance and downright homeliness of manner, and a choice of matter illustrating and enforcing his view of the subject,—and never above it, pervade the whole,—mixed up, indeed, with an earnestness, zeal, force and passion, which account for their celebrity.—Even in the Oration for the Crown,—the most perfect, undoubtedly, and comprehending in it the excellences of the rest, though every species of weapon in the oratorical armoury is employed,—poetical description,—indignant exaggeration,—inflammatory declamation, and bold apostrophe, yet is there not an instance, we will venture to say, (and we appeal to those of our readers the most confidently who have studied him best,) in which they appear to be ostentatiously introduced, or in which they are not sustained by the surrounding passages of the Speech. They, indeed, more nearly resemble an occasional and accidental inflammation of the fervid and electric torrent which the orator is pouring on his hearers, than foreign and adventitious lights brought forward for mere purposes of shining and display. The sublime appeal to the manes of the heroes of Marathon and Plataea, to which we shall not be suspected of referring, in order to bestow, for the thousandth time, unnecessary commendation, or to compare it, as we have seen Dionysius did, with any effort of human composition, we notice for a different object. It is, perhaps, one of the boldest and most excessive, and, from the constant reference to it, we must suppose, one of the most successful of his Figures. Those, however, who will take up the Speech

at that part where Demosthenes describes the jealousy and distrust which rankled between the Athenians and Thebans before the battle of Cheronæa, the removal of which formed one of the most successful feats of his policy and eloquence, and will pursue his lofty appeals to national honour, and the deeds of their ancestors, which called upon the Athenians, if necessary, rather to fall in a struggle for liberty and glory, than to pursue inglorious security in obedience to Philip ;—those, we say, who follow up the preceding passages with any thing of an adequate spirit, will feel themselves, from the tone of excitement and elevation which surround it, upon a level with the sublimity of this most celebrated apostrophe. Let this passage, then, have its reputation : We shall not attempt to add to it ; but we call upon our readers, when they feel, by actual experiment, how little this part *stands out* from the rest, to reflect what must be the tone of the surrounding parts to sustain what, if taken by itself, must be deemed such extravagance and excess.

In adverting to the apparently natural growth of ornament in the Orations of Demosthenes, and pointing it out as a proof of their excellence, we must not omit to notice how different is the conduct of his antagonists and rivals in this particular.—Æschines, whose general good taste is undoubted, in the concluding paragraph of his Oration, after having dwelt upon the laws, the breach of which by Ctesiphon formed the strength of his case (and nothing could be stronger), in the treatment of which subject he had been, of course, plain and simple and didactic, by design, without any previous excitement to justify it, breaks out, all at once, into this exclamation.—‘ I then (I call you to witness — ye Earth, and Sun, and Virtue, and Intellect, and Education, by which we distinguish what is honourable) have spoken and given my help ; — if adequately, and in a manner worthy of the violation of the laws, — as I wished ; — if imperfectly, then only as I have been able.’ — Εγὼ μὲν ἔν, ὦ Γῆ, καὶ Ἥλιε, καὶ Αἰθέρῃ, καὶ Συνέσει, καὶ Παιδείᾳ, ἣ διαγινώσκομεν τα καλά, &c.—Who does not perceive, that this sudden appeal to bodies and qualities, which had nothing to do with his particular subject, and hardly with any other, is a mere oratorical flourish ? Accordingly, we find that Demosthenes, in his reply upon him, ridicules this matured and misplaced apostrophe, and charges Æschines with considering the controversy between them as an affair *of the lungs*, and under that idea, bawling and mouthing ὦ Γῆ, &c. &c. like a tragedy hero.—The same observations apply, perhaps with more justice,—certainly more frequently, to Cicero’s style,—or, rather to passages which, though the admiration of schoolboys, are unquestionably the most faulty, and from which, if he had not redeemed himself by the great body of his Orations, he would never have commanded the extraordinary admiration of more severe judges. In his Oration for Marcellus, in returning thanks to Cæsar for sparing him, and restoring him to his honours, he breaks out,—‘ By heavens, the very walls of this Senate-house are impatient to express their gratitude to you, Caius Cæsar,’ &c.—‘ Parietes, mediusfidiùs C. Cæsar, ut mihi videtur, hujus Curiae gratias tibi agere gestiunt,’ &c.—In one of his Orations against Verres, we have the following animated, and tolerably *sustained*, but, nevertheless rhetorical and *professional* passage — ‘ Should I paint the horrors of this scene,—not to Roman citizens,—not to the allies of our State,—not to those who have ever heard of the Roman name,—not even to men, but to Brute-creatures ; or, *to go further*, should I lift

up my voice in the most desolate solitude, to the rocks and mountains; yet should I surely see those mute and inanimate parts of nature moved with terror and indignation, at the recital of so enormous an action.' *Hume's Transl.*—'Quod si hæc non ad cives Romanos, non ad aliquos amicos nostræ Civitati, non ad eos qui populi Romani nomen audissent; denique si non ad homines, verùm ad bestias; aut etiam, *ut longiùs progrediar*, si in aliquâ desertissimâ solitudine ad saxa et ad scopulos hæc conqueri et deplorare vellem, tamen omnia muta atque inanima tantâ et tam indignâ rerum atrocitate commoverentur.'—We are aware, that there is all that composition can do to *carry this off*; and there is excitement also—but the artist shows himself too strongly. But who would have expected from the second orator in the world, in the full possession of his powers, in a passage of no irritation,—a mere literary subject,—in praise of the poets, and his client one of the number, the following puerile declamation?—'Rocks and deserts answer to their voice; savage monsters are arrested by their song, and stand still;—shall we, formed as we are by the best instruction, refuse to be moved by the power of song?'—'Saxa et solitudines voci respondent; bestiæ sæpe immanes cantu flectuntur atque consistunt;—nos, instituti rebus optimis, poetarum voce non moveamur?'—From these, and innumerable other instances which might be selected, but from which, we repeat, it would be most unjust to form a judgment of Cicero, it is quite manifest, that his art is much more upon the surface; that he is much more ostentatious than Demosthenes; and that, in such instances, sound criticism must often disapprove; as, indeed, we find the immortal orator himself pronouncing sentence, at a more advanced period of his judgment, against some early and fanciful, but highly-wrought passages of his own, from their very excess, and because too far removed from the business and bosoms of men,—minùs aptæ rebus agendis.

The next question is,—How is the ascendancy of Demosthenes to be accounted for?—We are aware of the fearful extent of this inquiry, and must confine ourselves within certain limits.—The language, rich as it is, undoubtedly, and copious and powerful,—expressing the varieties of moods, and tenses, and cases by most artificial and elegant inflexions, without the aid of our useful, but untuneful monosyllables,—will, shall, would, could, should, &c.—with the delicacy of compound words, which frequently assign qualifications and degrees to expressions, which, with us, are general and indefinite (to fear, to love, &c. means any quantity of the sensation, and is, *of itself*, indeterminate)—the peculiarity of the middle voice partaking of the active and passive nature;—this language, we doubt not, is an ingredient in the case, but we think overrated, and too much relied upon in considering this subject.

The true solution of this phenomenon is to be looked for, we believe, in the singular state and condition of Greece, and of Athens more particularly.—A Republic of independent nations, differing from each other in their particular habits and institutions, but united for purposes of general safety,—burning with the most anxious and jealous desire of surpassing each other;—brought into frequent contact and collision upon set and solemn occasions of Religion—of Games—of Spectacles;—nursed and pampered into the most unbounded and bigotted nationality by the achievements of their ancestors,—a nationality kept alive by Poetry, by Oratory,—by Monuments and Inscriptions;—impressed with an unshaken belief (not very far removed from the truth),

that whatever was great and good and virtuous and splendid, centered in, and was confined to their own territory:—such a people were continually goaded and stimulated to exertion by the most intense rivalry and impatient thirst for glory.—The very narrowness of their limits, to which, in their firm persuasion, no accession of importance or of value would have been made, if the rest of the world had been added, by facilitating frequent intercourse, served only to condense the spirit.—The eager controversy for victory at their games,—the anxiety and interest in the spectators, and the infinite applause which was showered down upon the victors, serve to illustrate the course and tendency of our remarks, of which we purposely only give our readers a taste, without pursuing them in all their details.—‘Why do you not die, Diagoras,’ said a spectator at the Olympic Games to the father of two victorious sons,—‘Why do you not die,—for you cannot become a God?’—‘Mori Diagora, neque enim in cœlum ascensurus es.’ In a nation composed of such materials, and in such a constant strife for eminence and superiority, the Athenians were, unquestionably, the foremost in the race of fame,—and that too of literary fame. We forbear to notice other particulars, which are only, incidentally, to our present purpose, and come at once to the study of Oratory.—Not merely from what they have left us, which would justify *an inference* of their superiority in the art, but from the *direct* testimony of Demosthenes himself, given in the most unsuspecting and undesigning manner, it appears that such was the contemporary opinion respecting them.—When he spoke for the Crown, Greece came and listened to him. This ascendancy we must, of course, attribute not merely to the peculiar aptitude of this most ingenious and lively people for making a proficiency, but to the vigour and earnestness of the pursuit. Eloquence was the road to honours and distinction; and the competitors for them outstripped each other in proportion to their acquirement and success. Now this we take to be the solution. ‘Honos alit artes,’ says Cicero most truly, ‘omnesque incenduntur ad studia gloriæ;’ and the quantity of exertion is sure to be in proportion to the ardency of the love of fame. And as in Greece, generally, and particularly at Athens, the intensity of this glorious passion was, for the reasons we have generally alluded to, greater we believe than it ever was in any other country, it would only be reasonable to expect, and accordingly we are informed, that there were greater exertions made in cultivating public speaking, than there can have been anywhere else,—and this accounts for excellence.—Our readers are aware, that Fielding has *proved satisfactorily*, in his dry and humorous manner, that an author will write something better, for knowing something of his subject; but we are persuaded that our readers will not require us to make out, by regular deduction, that a man who employs his whole life in one pursuit, is likely to excel another who applies only one-tenth part of the time to it.

If our limits would allow us, we should abstain from entering into particulars of the *midnight lamp* and labours of Demosthenes. Cicero abounds in them, and Plutarch still more. We will confine ourselves to one slight circumstance. He could not, it seems, pronounce the first letter of his own profession, the *r* in Rhetor; a letter, by the way, which sticks in the throats of no inconsiderable part of the inhabitants of this Empire. How few, we would ask, amongst us, even in the educated classes, who have once been fairly infected with this impediment, have the courage and resolution to conquer a defect, — unpleasant

in conversation, but, for any of the higher exertions of elocution, fatal? Yet Demosthenes, we are told, by some means or other (we wish we had an easier receipt than his, for the sake of some of our nearest English neighbours) contrived, by perseverance, to vanquish the difficulty, and to articulate the stubborn guttural *most plainly*. ‘*Exercitatione fecisse, ut plenissimè diceret!*’ Cicero’s exertions were equal. His Life is before us in his works; and from them it appears, that he literally never said, or did, or thought of any thing else but in what manner to improve himself in oratory. The consequence has been, that if the world should last ten times as long as it has done already, we believe he never will be surpassed in mere composition.

When Demosthenes and Cicero concur expressly upon any subject connected with eloquence, he must be a bold man who differs from them. Now the former, in his Oration for the Crown, in the only passage in which he speaks of his own talent, and the latter in his principal Treatise, declares, that *the audience* forms the speaker. With reference to Demosthenes, Cicero observes of the Athenians, ‘that their judgment was always correct and genuine; so that an orator, who courted their approbation, never durst venture to use a single unauthorized or offensive expression.’—‘*Semper oratorum eloquentiæ moderatrix fuit auditorum prudentia.*’ And again, of the Athenians, in the same passage—‘*Semper fuit prudens sincerumq. judicium, nihil ut possent nisi incorruptum audire et elegans. Eorum religioni cum serviret orator, nullum verbum insolens, nullum odiosum ponere audebat.*’ *Orat.*

After this, we will not stop to discuss the qualities of the Athenian *Mob*, as contrasted with the British Senate, or incur the hazard of a Breach of Privilege, by any opinion we might express;—but this at least is certain, that in one most essential particular affecting the very business of a speaker, Demosthenes had a manifest advantage, in possessing an audience perfectly open to persuasion.—Whatever may be thought of the wisdom of such a government, it furnished materials most fit for eloquence to work upon. The people, themselves the Legislators, if convinced by what they heard, manifested their conviction by instant adoption.—The power of the orator was confessed,—the effect immediate,—his triumph complete.—Now, let us see how the case is in the British House of Commons, which, from the spirit of inquiry amongst our countrymen,—their love of liberty, the parent and nurse of eloquence,—their information, as well as from the freedom of debate, which has obtained there for more than a century—and, above all, from the weighty and interesting subjects of discussion, must be considered the principal theatre for oratory in modern times. In that assembly, then, can any Member, judging from experience and observation, reasonably hope to produce that effect, which Cicero justly considers so honourable and so gratifying—‘*mentes impellere quò velit, unde autem velit, deducere?*’—May not the Division usually be predicted before the commencement of the debate?—Are not the opinions of honourable Members securely deposited in their heads, or in their pockets, or in some place of security into which Eloquence cannot penetrate?—Is it not a fact, of obvious and indisputable notoriety, that the greatest speakers on both sides of the question (and they cannot both be right) do frequently exhibit their powers without obtaining a single convert—without procuring a single vote?—And can the same animation,—the same energy,—and, in one

word, the same eloquence be expected, where there is no possible chance of producing (that which is the primary object—the obvious use—the legitimate end of all speaking)—conviction, and conviction manifested by the overt act of adopting or rejecting the measure which the orator recommends, or from which he dissuades?—If it be said that, as to the effect within doors, this may be true; the speaker may no doubt, in one sense, consider himself, by a sort of reflex operation, as convincing the distant inhabitants of Cumberland or Cornwall.—But so may a writer composing in his closet: and surely it cannot be said, (as assuredly it has never yet been supposed,) that such an obscure and remote anticipation of we know not what success, can be compared to the spirit-stirring effect—the electrical excitement of a numerous, attentive, and above all, a *convertible* audience.

In many respects, the Trial by Jury, as practised in this country, seems much better calculated to elicit and encourage this admirable talent. Their integrity—their impartiality—their openness, approaching to facility, to impression, are all strong excitements to exertion, and calculated to lead to success. The nature of the subjects, indeed, which come before them, so generally incapable of ornament, and devoid of interest, and the peculiar study of those who address them,—a study which, though Burke says (we know not how truly) it does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding than all other sciences put together, is an enemy to good taste and composition, and often seems to thrive best without them,—these, undoubtedly, are serious objections. Yet we have seen, from the Speeches of Lord Erskine, both public and private, and since, from a defence of an alleged libel upon the subject of military punishments by Mr. Brougham, what might be expected if subjects of general interest and discussion could be constantly submitted to a tribunal so impartial and assailable. Upon the merits of Lord Erskine's Speeches, we have delivered our deliberate opinion, and shall not proceed again over the same ground. In those of a particular description, in which feeling and passion are more immediately concerned, nothing can exceed the delicacy and tenderness with which he sometimes describes scenes of domestic endearment and felicity, or the lofty tone of indignation with which he lashes and scourges their invaders. On other occasions, he brings forward circumstances of an opposite description with equal effect and energy. In one particular case, where he represents his client the defendant, by every previous understanding between themselves,—by plighted faith,—by every virtuous and honourable attachment and implied engagement, as the husband of the plaintiff's wife, whatever forms or ceremonies might have been employed to give an appearance to the contrary, and then brings the plaintiff forward as the violater, and makes him the defendant,—the whole conception is in a strain of boldness, and executed with a degree of vigour worthy of Demosthenes himself. But we have adverted again to these admirable Speeches, chiefly for the sake of an observation connected with our present subject, which arises very forcibly from a perusal of his last and highest effort,—the defence of Stockdale. We are persuaded, that if Lord Erskine's exertions had been confined to the two Houses of Parliament, he never would have produced any thing half so excellent as his Speeches generally;—nor, if our Indian policy had been discussed before Lords or Commons, could he have produced *that*. Nobody required more, nor benefited more largely, from the

accompanying sensations of his audience, which are, in truth, the support and food of an orator.* He *felt* his ground inch by inch. Never could he have been elevated to the pitch of that most extraordinary, most poetical and sublime passage, so entirely in the tone of Antiquity, (we mean the introduction of the Savage in his Speech,) by the cold, and, comparatively, unmeaning, ‘*Hear-hims*’ of an assembly which would not be convinced (so far as conviction is manifested by conduct) ‘though one rose from the dead.’ He loved to domineer over the wills and affections of men, not for mere purposes of empty admiration, but to gain them over to his side—to *gain his cause*. This, when he was addressing the Jury, *he did*; and, what is beyond comparison the highest of all possible stimulants, *he saw and felt* that he was doing at the time. He tells us so, or rather he told them so at the moment. Secure of this point, but not satisfied, and not permitting the advantage gained to be even a stage and resting-place in his lofty career;—animated by success, and conscious of his strength,—in the midst of universal inflammation—of his audience and of himself, he proceeded to deliver that victorious and triumphant passage, which contributed, doubtless, largely to the deliverance of his client, and will remain an everlasting monument of his own glory, whilst the name of England and its language shall endure.—‘What’ we can only add with Æschines,—‘what if we had heard him?’

Large, however, and ample as have been our commendations of this celebrated oration, we cannot conclude (though at the utmost verge of our limits) without observing that no speaker has approached so nearly, in general resemblance and manner, to Demosthenes, as Mr. Fox. No politician, we believe, and few scholars, understood and admired the old master more perfectly. Many striking properties and qualities were the same in both.—A certain sincerity and open-heartedness of manner,—an apparently entire and thorough conviction of being in the right,—an everlasting pursuit of, and entire devotion to the subject, to the seeming neglect and forgetfulness of every thing else,—an abrupt tone of vehemence and indignation,—a steadfast love of freedom, and corresponding hatred of oppression in all its forms,—a natural and idiomatic style,—vigour, argument, power—these were characteristics equally of the Greek and English orator. Even in the details, in their hurried and hasty transitions,—in their use of parentheses to get rid of minor topics as they proceed, and in the general structure of sentences, it would not be difficult to point out frequent similarity.†

* Cicero remarks this, in the conduct of Demosthenes in his Oration for the Crown.

* The eloquence of Demosthenes and of the Greek Orators forms the subject of two elaborate Essays in subsequent Nos. of the E. Review. See Vol. xxxvi. pages 82 and 483. They have been attributed to the author of the foregoing *critique*.

MACHIAVELLI.*

ON THE WORKS AND CHARACTER OF MACHIAVELLI.

THOSE who have attended to the practice of our literary tribunal, are well aware that, by means of certain legal fictions similar to those of Westminster Hall, we are frequently enabled to take cognizance of cases lying beyond the sphere of our original jurisdiction. We need hardly say, therefore, that, in the present instance, M. Périer is merely a Richard Roe—that his name is used for the sole purpose of bringing Machiavelli into court—and that he will not be mentioned in any subsequent stage of the proceedings.

We doubt whether any name in literary history be so generally odious as that of the man whose character and writings we now propose to consider. The terms in which he is commonly described, would seem to import that he was the Tempter, the Evil Principle, the discoverer of ambition and revenge, the original inventor of perjury; that, before the publication of his fatal *Prince*, there had never been a hypocrite, a tyrant, or a traitor, a simulated virtue or a convenient crime. One writer gravely assures us, that Maurice of Saxony learned all his fraudulent policy from that execrable volume. Another remarks, that, since it was translated into Turkish, the Sultans have been more addicted than formerly to the custom of strangling their brothers. Our own foolish Lord Lyttelton charges the poor Florentine with the manifold treasons of the House of Guise, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Several authors have hinted that the Gunpowder Plot is to be primarily attributed to his doctrines, and seem to think that his effigy ought to be substituted for that of Guy Faux, in those processions by which the ingenuous youth of England annually commemorate the preservation of the Three Estates. The Church of Rome has pronounced his works accursed things. Nor have our own countrymen been backward in testifying their opinion of his merits. Out of his surname they have coined an epithet for a knave—and out of his christian name a synonyme for the Devil.†

It is indeed scarcely possible for any person, not well acquainted with the history and literature of Italy, to read, without horror and amazement, the celebrated treatise which has brought so much obloquy on the name of Machiavelli. Such a display of wickedness, naked, yet not ashamed, such cool, judicious, scientific atrocity, seem rather to belong to a fiend than to the most depraved of men. Principles which the most hardened ruffian would scarcely hint to his most trusted accomplice, or avow, without the disguise of some palliating sophism, even to his own mind, are professed without the slightest circumlocution, and assumed as the fundamental axioms of all political science.

It is not strange that ordinary readers should regard the author of such a book as the most depraved and shameless of human beings. Wise men, however, have always been inclined to look with great suspicion on the angels and demons of the multitude: and in the

* Œuvres complètes de Machiavel, traduites par J. V. Périer. Paris, 1825. —Vol. xlv. page 259. 1827.

† Nick Machiavel had ne'er a trick,
 Tho' he gave his name to our old Nick.—*Hudibras*, part iii. canto i.
 But, we believe, there is a schism on this subject among the Antiquarians.

present instance, several circumstances have led even superficial observers to question the justice of the vulgar decision. It is notorious that Machiavelli was, through life, a zealous republican. In the same year in which he composed his manual of King-craft, he suffered imprisonment and torture in the cause of public liberty. It seems inconceivable that the martyr of freedom should have designedly acted as the apostle of tyranny. Several eminent writers have, therefore, endeavoured to detect, in this unfortunate performance, some concealed meaning, more consistent with the character and conduct of the author than that which appears at the first glance.

One hypothesis is, that Machiavelli intended to practise on the young Lorenzo de Medici, a fraud similar to that which Sunderland is said to have employed against our James the Second,—that he urged his pupil to violent and perfidious measures, as the surest means of accelerating the moment of deliverance and revenge. Another supposition, which Lord Bacon seems to countenance, is, that the treatise was merely a piece of grave irony, intended to warn nations against the arts of ambitious men. It would be easy to show that neither of these solutions is consistent with many passages in the *Prince* itself. But the most decisive refutation is that which is furnished by the other works of Machiavelli. In all the writings which he gave to the public, and in all those which the research of editors has, in the course of three centuries, discovered—in his Comedies, designed for the entertainment of the multitude—in his Comments on Livy, intended for the perusal of the most enthusiastic patriots of Florence—in his History, inscribed to one of the most amiable and estimable of the Popes—in his Public Despatches—in his Private Memoranda, the same obliquity of moral principle for which the *Prince* is so severely censured is more or less discernible. We doubt whether it would be possible to find, in all the many volumes of his compositions, a single expression indicating that dissimulation and treachery had ever struck him as discreditable.

After this, it may seem ridiculous to say, that we are acquainted with few writings which exhibit so much elevation of sentiment, so pure and warm a zeal for the public good, or so just a view of the duties and rights of citizens, as those of Machiavelli. Yet so it is. And even from the *Prince* itself, we could select many passages in support of this remark. To a reader of our age and country, this inconsistency is, at first, perfectly bewildering. The whole man seems to be an enigma—a grotesque assemblage of incongruous qualities—selfishness and generosity, cruelty and benevolence, craft and simplicity, abject villany and romantic heroism. One sentence is such as a veteran diplomatist would scarcely write in cipher for the direction of his most confidential spy; the next seems to be extracted from a theme composed by an ardent schoolboy on the death of Leonidas. An act of dexterous perfidy, and an act of patriotic self-devotion, call forth the same kind and the same degree of respectful admiration. The moral sensibility of the writer seems at once to be morbidly obtuse and morbidly acute. Two characters altogether dissimilar are united in him. They are not merely joined, but interwoven. They are the warp and the woof of his mind; and their combination, like that of the variegated threads in shot silk, gives to the whole texture a glancing and ever-changing appearance. The explanation might have been easy, if he had been a very weak or a very affected man.

But he was evidently neither the one nor the other. His works prove, beyond all contradiction, that his understanding was strong, his taste pure, and his sense of the ridiculous exquisitely keen.

This is strange—and yet the strangest is behind. There is no reason whatever to think, that those amongst whom he lived saw any thing shocking or incongruous in his writings. Abundant proofs remain of the high estimation in which both his works and his person were held by the most respectable among his contemporaries. Clement the Seventh patronized the publication of those very books which the Council of Trent, in the following generation, pronounced unfit for the perusal of Christians. Some members of the democratical party censured the Secretary for dedicating the *Prince* to a patron who bore the unpopular name of Medici. But to those immoral doctrines, which have since called forth such severe reprehensions, no exception appears to have been taken. The cry against them was first raised beyond the Alps—and seems to have been heard with amazement in Italy. The earliest assailant, as far as we are aware, was a countryman of our own, Cardinal Pole. The author of the *Anti-Machiavelli* was a French Protestant.

It is, therefore, in the state of moral feeling among the Italians of those times, that we must seek for the real explanation of what seems most mysterious in the life and writings of this remarkable man. As this is a subject which suggests many interesting considerations, both political and metaphysical, we shall make no apology for discussing it at some length.

During the gloomy and disastrous centuries which followed the downfall of the Roman Empire, Italy had preserved, in a far greater degree than any other part of Western Europe, the traces of ancient civilization. The night which descended upon her was the night of an Arctic summer:—the dawn began to reappear before the last reflection of the preceding sunset had faded from the horizon. It was in the time of the French Merovingians, and of the Saxon Heptarchy, that ignorance and ferocity seemed to have done their worst. Yet even then the Neapolitan provinces, recognizing the authority of the Eastern Empire, preserved something of Eastern knowledge and refinement. Rome, protected by the sacred character of its Pontiffs, enjoyed at least comparative security and repose. Even in those regions where the sanguinary Lombards had fixed their monarchy, there was incomparably more of wealth, of information, of physical comfort, and of social order, than could be found in Gaul, Britain, or Germany.

That which most distinguished Italy from the neighbouring countries, was the importance which the population of the towns, from a very early period, began to acquire. Some cities founded in wild and remote situations, by fugitives who had escaped from the rage of the barbarians, preserved their freedom by their obscurity, till they became able to preserve it by their power. Others seems to have retained, under all the changing dynasties of invaders, under Odoacer and Theodoric, Narses and Alboin, the municipal institutions which had been conferred on them by the liberal policy of the Great Republic. In provinces which the central government was too feeble either to protect or to oppress, these institutions first acquired stability and vigour. The citizens, defended by their walls, and governed by their own magistrates and their own by-laws, enjoyed a considerable share

of republican independence. Thus a strong democratic spirit was called into action. The Carlovingian sovereigns were too imbecile to subdue it. The generous policy of Otho encouraged it. It might perhaps have been suppressed by a close coalition between the Church and the Empire. It was fostered and invigorated by their disputes. In the twelfth century it attained its full vigour, and, after a long and doubtful conflict, triumphed over the abilities and courage of the Swabian Princes.

The assistance of the Ecclesiastical Power had greatly contributed to the success of the Guelfs. That success would, however, have been a doubtful good, if its only effect had been to substitute a moral for a political servitude, to exalt the Popes at the expense of the Cæsars. Happily the public mind of Italy had long contained the seeds of free opinions, which were now rapidly developed by the genial influence of free institutions. The people of that country had observed the whole machinery of the church, its saints and its miracles, its lofty pretensions and its splendid ceremonial, its worthless blessings and its harmless curses, too long and too closely to be duped. They stood behind the scenes on which others were gazing with childish awe and interest. They witnessed the arrangement of the pulleys, and the manufacture of the thunders. They saw the natural faces, and heard the natural voices of the actors. Distant nations looked on the Pope as the viceroy of the Almighty, the Oracle of the All-wise, the umpire from whose decisions, in the disputes either of theologians or of kings, no Christian ought to appeal. The Italians were acquainted with all the follies of his youth, and with all the dishonest arts by which he had attained power. They knew how often he had employed the keys of the church to release himself from the most sacred engagements, and its wealth to pamper his mistresses and nephews. The doctrines and rites of the established religion they treated with decent reverence. But though they still called themselves Catholics, they had ceased to be Papists. Those spiritual arms which carried terror into the palaces and camps of the proudest sovereigns, excited only their contempt. When Alexander commanded our Henry the Second to submit to the lash before the tomb of a rebellious subject, he was himself an exile. The Romans, apprehending that he entertained designs against their liberties, had driven him from their city; and, though he solemnly promised to confine himself for the future to his spiritual functions; they still refused to readmit him.

In every other part of Europe, a large and powerful privileged class trampled on the people, and defied the government. But, in the most flourishing parts of Italy, the feudal nobles were reduced to comparative insignificance. In some districts they took shelter under the protection of the powerful commonwealths which they were unable to oppose, and gradually sunk into the mass of burghers. In others they possessed great influence; but it was an influence widely different from that which was exercised by the chieftains of the Transalpine kingdoms. They were not petty princes, but eminent citizens. Instead of strengthening their fastnesses among the mountains, they embellished their palaces in the market-place. The state of society in the Neapolitan dominions, and in some parts of the Ecclesiastical State, more nearly resembled that which existed in the great monarchies of Europe. But the Governments of Lombardy and Tuscany, through all their revolutions, preserved a different character. A people, when assembled in a town, is far more formidable to its rulers than when dispersed over a

wide extent of country. The most arbitrary of the Cæsars found it necessary to feed and divert the inhabitants of their unwieldy capital at the expense of the provinces. The citizens of Madrid have more than once besieged their sovereign in his own palace, and extorted from him the most humiliating concessions. The Sultans have often been compelled to propitiate the furious rabble of Constantinople with the head of an unpopular Vizier. From the same cause there was a certain tinge of democracy in the monarchies and aristocracies of Northern Italy.

Thus liberty, partially indeed and transiently, revisited Italy; and with liberty came commerce and empire, science and taste, all the comforts and all the ornaments of life. The Crusades, from which the inhabitants of other countries gained nothing but relics and wounds, brought the rising commonwealths of the Adriatic and Tyrrhene seas a large increase of wealth, dominion and knowledge. Their moral and their geographical position enabled them to profit alike by the barbarism of the West, and by the civilization of the East. Their ships covered every sea. Their factories rose on every shore. Their money-changers set their tables in every city. Manufactures flourished. Banks were established. The operations of the commercial machine were facilitated by many useful and beautiful inventions. We doubt whether any country of Europe, our own perhaps excepted, have at the present time reached so high a point of wealth and civilization as some parts of Italy had attained four hundred years ago. Historians rarely descend to those details from which alone the real state of a community can be collected. Hence posterity is too often deceived by the vague hyperboles of poets and rhetoricians, who mistake the splendour of a court for the happiness of a people. Fortunately, John Villani has given us an ample and precise account of the state of Florence in the earlier part of the fourteenth century. The revenue of the Republic amounted to three hundred thousand florins, a sum which, allowing for the depreciation of the precious metals, was at least equivalent to six hundred thousand pounds sterling; a larger sum than England and Ireland, two centuries ago, yielded annually to Elizabeth—a larger sum than, according to any computation which we have seen, the Grand Duke of Tuscany now derives from a territory of much greater extent. The manufacture of wool alone employed two hundred factories and thirty thousand workmen. The cloth annually produced sold, at an average, for twelve hundred thousand florins; a sum fairly equal, in exchangeable value, to two millions and a half of our money. Four hundred thousand florins were annually coined. Eighty banks conducted the commercial operations, not of Florence only, but of all Europe. The transactions of these establishments were sometimes of a magnitude which may surprise even the contemporaries of the Barings and the Rothschilds. Two houses advanced to Edward the Third of England upwards of three hundred thousand marks, at a time when the mark contained more silver than fifty shillings of the present day, and when the value of silver was more than quadruple of what it now is. The city and its environs contained a hundred and seventy thousand inhabitants. In the various schools about ten thousand children were taught to read; twelve hundred studied arithmetic; six hundred received a learned education. The progress of elegant literature and of the fine arts was proportioned to that of the public prosperity. Under the despotic successors of Augustus, all the fields of the intellect had been turned into arid wastes, still marked out by formal boundaries,

still retaining the traces of old cultivation, but yielding neither flowers nor fruit. The deluge of barbarism came. It swept away all the landmarks. It obliterated all the signs of former tillage. But it fertilized while it devastated. When it receded, the wilderness was as the garden of God, rejoicing on every side, laughing, clapping its hands, pouring forth, in spontaneous abundance, every thing brilliant, or fragrant, or nourishing. A new language, characterized by simple sweetness and simple energy, had attained its perfection. No tongue ever furnished more gorgeous and vivid tints to poetry; nor was it long before a poet appeared, who knew how to employ them. Early in the fourteenth century came forth the Divine Comedy, beyond comparison the greatest work of imagination which had appeared since the poems of Homer. The following generation produced indeed no second Dante; but it was eminently distinguished by general intellectual activity. The study of the Latin writers had never been wholly neglected in Italy. But Petrarch introduced a more profound, liberal, and elegant scholarship; and communicated to his countrymen that enthusiasm for the literature, the history, and the antiquities of Rome, which divided his own heart with a frigid mistress and a more frigid Muse. Boccaccio turned their attention to the more sublime and graceful models of Greece.

From this time, the admiration of learning and genius became almost an idolatry among the people of Italy. Kings and republics, Cardinals and Doges, vied with each other in honouring and flattering Petrarch. Embassies from rival states solicited the honour of his instructions. His coronation agitated the Court of Naples and the people of Rome as much as the most important political transaction could have done. To collect books and antiques, to found professorships, to patronize men of learning, became almost universal fashions among the great. The spirit of literary research allied itself to that of commercial enterprise. Every place to which the merchant princes of Florence extended their gigantic traffic, from the bazaars of the Tigris to the monasteries of the Clyde, was ransacked for medals and manuscripts. Architecture, painting and sculpture, were munificently encouraged. Indeed it would be difficult to name an Italian of eminence, during the period of which we speak, who, whatever may have been his general character, did not at least affect a love of letters and of the arts.

Knowledge and public prosperity continued to advance together. Both attained their meridian in the age of Lorenzo the Magnificent. We cannot refrain from quoting the splendid passage, in which the Tuscan Thucydides describes the state of Italy at that period:—
 ‘ Ridotta tutta in somma pace e tranquillità, coltivata non meno ne’
 ‘ luoghi più montuosi e più sterili che nelle pianure e regioni più
 ‘ fertili, nè sottoposta ad altro imperio che de’ suoi medesimi, non solo
 ‘ era abbondantissima d’abitatori e di ricchezze; ma illustrata somma-
 ‘ mente dalla magnificenza di molti principi, dallo splendore di molte
 ‘ nobilissime e bellissime città, dalla sedia e maestà della religione,
 ‘ fioriva d’uomini prestantissimi nell’amministrazione delle cose pub-
 ‘ bliche, e d’ingegni molto nobili in tutte le scienze, ed in qualunque
 ‘ arte preclara ed industriosa.’* When we peruse this just and splendid description, we can scarcely persuade ourselves that we are reading of times in which the annals of England and France present us only with a frightful spectacle of poverty, barbarity, and ignorance. From the oppressions of illiterate masters, and the sufferings of a

* Guicciardini, lib. i.

brutalized peasantry, it is delightful to turn to the opulent and enlightened States of Italy—to the vast and magnificent cities, the ports, the arsenals, the villas, the museums, the libraries, the marts filled with every article of comfort or luxury, the manufactories swarming with artisans, the Apennines covered with rich cultivation up to their very summits, the Po wafting the harvests of Lombardy to the granaries of Venice, and carrying back the silks of Bengal and the furs of Siberia to the palaces of Milan. With peculiar pleasure, every cultivated mind must repose on the fair, the happy, the glorious Florence—on the halls which rung with the mirth of Pulci—the cell where twinkled the midnight lamp of Politian—the statues on which the young eye of Michael Angelo glared with the frenzy of a kindred inspiration—the gardens in which Lorenzo meditated some sparkling song for the May-day dance of the Etrurian virgins. Alas, for the beautiful city! Alas, for the wit and the learning, the genius and the love!

‘ Le donne, i cavalier, gli affanni, gli agi,
Che né’nvogliava amore e cortesia,
La dove i cuor son fatti sì malvagi.’ *

A time was at hand, when all the seven vials of the Apocalypse were to be poured forth and shaken out over those pleasant countries—a time of slaughter, famine, beggary, infamy, slavery, despair!

In the Italian States, as in many natural bodies, untimely decrepitude was the penalty of precocious maturity. Their early greatness, and their early decline, are principally to be attributed to the same cause—the preponderance which the towns acquired in the political system.

In a community of hunters or of shepherds, every man easily and necessarily becomes a soldier. His ordinary avocations are perfectly compatible with all the duties of military service. However remote may be the expedition on which he is bound, he finds it easy to transport with him the stock from which he derives his subsistence. The whole people is an army; the whole year a march. Such was the state of society which facilitated the gigantic conquests of Attila and Timour.

But a people which subsists by the cultivation of the earth is in a very different situation. The husbandman is bound to the soil on which he labours. A long campaign would be ruinous to him. Still his pursuits are such as give to his frame both the active and the passive strength necessary to a soldier. Nor do they, at least in the infancy of agricultural science, demand his uninterrupted attention. At particular times of the year he is almost wholly unemployed, and can, without injury to himself, afford the time necessary for a short expedition. Thus the legions of Rome were supplied during its earlier wars. The season during which the farms did not require the presence of the cultivators sufficed for a short inroad and a battle. These operations, too frequently interrupted to produce decisive results, yet served to keep up among the people a degree of discipline and courage which rendered them, not only secure, but formidable. The archers and billmen of the middle ages, who, with provisions for forty days at their backs, left the fields for the camp, were troops of the same description.

* Dante Purgatorio, xiv.

But, when commerce and manufactures begin to flourish, a great change takes place. The sedentary habits of the desk and the loom render the exertions and hardships of war insupportable. The occupations of traders and artisans require their constant presence and attention. In such a community there is little superfluous time; but there is generally much superfluous money. Some members of the society are, therefore, hired to relieve the rest from a task inconsistent with their habits and engagements.

The history of Greece is, in this, as in many other respects, the best commentary on the history of Italy. Five hundred years before the Christian era, the citizens of the republics round the *Ægean* Sea formed perhaps the finest militia that ever existed. As wealth and refinement advanced, the system underwent a gradual alteration. The Ionian States were the first in which commerce and the arts were cultivated—and the first in which the ancient discipline decayed. Within eighty years after the battle of Plataea, mercenary troops were everywhere plying for battles and sieges. In the time of Demosthenes, it was scarcely possible to persuade or compel the Athenians to enlist for foreign service. The laws of Lycurgus prohibited trade and manufactures. The Spartans, therefore, continued to form a national force long after their neighbours had begun to hire soldiers. But their military spirit declined with their singular institutions. In the second century, Greece contained only one nation of warriors, the savage highlanders of *Ætolia*, who were at least ten generations behind their countrymen in civilization and intelligence.

All the causes which produced these effects among the Greeks, acted still more strongly on the modern Italians. Instead of a power like Sparta, in its nature warlike, they had amongst them an ecclesiastical state, in its nature pacific. Where there are numerous slaves, every freeman is induced by the strongest motives to familiarize himself with the use of arms. The commonwealths of Italy did not, like those of Greece, swarm with thousands of these household enemies. Lastly, the mode in which military operations were conducted during the prosperous times of Italy, was peculiarly unfavourable to the formation of an efficient militia. Men covered with iron from head to foot, armed with ponderous lances, and mounted on horses of the largest breed, were considered as composing the strength of an army. The infantry was regarded as comparatively worthless, and was neglected till it became really so. These tactics maintained their ground for centuries in most parts of Europe. That foot soldiers could withstand the charge of heavy cavalry was thought utterly impossible, till, towards the close of the fifteenth century, the rude mountaineers of Switzerland dissolved the spell, and astounded the most experienced generals, by receiving the dreaded shock on an impenetrable forest of pikes.

The use of the Grecian spear, the Roman sword, or the modern bayonet, might be acquired with comparative ease. But nothing short of the daily exercise of years could train the man-at-arms to support his ponderous panoply, and manage his unwieldy weapon. Throughout Europe this most important branch of war became a separate profession. Beyond the Alps, indeed, though a profession, it was not generally a trade. It was the duty and the amusement of a large class of country gentlemen. It was the service by which they held their lands, and the diversion by which, in the absence of mental resources,

they beguiled their leisure. But in the Northern States of Italy, as we have already remarked, the growing power of the cities, where it had not exterminated this order of men, had completely changed their habits. Here, therefore, the practice of employing mercenaries became universal, at a time when it was almost unknown in other countries.

When war becomes the trade of a separate class, the least dangerous course left to a government is to form that class into a standing army. It is scarcely possible, that men can pass their lives in the service of a single state, without feeling some interest in its greatness. Its victories are their victories. Its defeats are their defeats. The contract loses something of its mercantile character. The services of the soldier are considered as the effects of patriotic zeal, his pay as the tribute of national gratitude. To betray the power which employs him, to be even remiss in its service, are in his eyes the most atrocious and degrading of crimes.

When the princes and commonwealths of Italy began to use hired troops, their wisest course would have been to form separate military establishments. Unhappily this was not done. The mercenary warriors of the Peninsula, instead of being attached to the service of different powers, were regarded as the common property of all. The connexion between the state and its defenders was reduced to the most simple and naked traffic. The adventurer brought his horse, his weapons, his strength, and his experience, into the market. Whether the King of Naples or the Duke of Milan, the Pope or the Signory of Florence, struck the bargain, was to him a matter of perfect indifference. He was for the highest wages and the longest term. When the campaign for which he had contracted was finished, there was neither law nor punctilio to prevent him from instantly turning his arms against his late masters. The soldier was altogether disjoined from the citizen and from the subject.

The natural consequences followed. Left to the conduct of men who neither loved those whom they defended nor hated those whom they opposed—who were often bound by stronger ties to the army against which they fought than the state which they served—who lost by the termination of the conflict, and gained by its prolongation, war completely changed its character. Every man came into the field of battle impressed with the knowledge that, in a few days, he might be taking the pay of the power against which he was then employed, and fighting by the side of his enemies against his associates. The strongest interest and the strongest feelings concurred to mitigate the hostility of those who had lately been brethren in arms, and who might soon be brethren in arms once more. Their common profession was a bond of union not to be forgotten even when they were engaged in the service of contending parties. Hence it was that operations, languid and indecisive beyond any recorded in history, marches and countermarches, pillaging expeditions and blockades, bloodless capitulations and equally bloodless combats, make up the military history of Italy during the course of nearly two centuries. Mighty armies fight from sunrise to sunset. A great victory is won. Thousands of prisoners are taken; and hardly a life is lost! A pitched battle seems to have been really less dangerous than an ordinary civil tumult.

Courage was now no longer necessary even to the military character. Men grew old in camps, and acquired the highest renown by their warlike achievements, without being once required to face serious

danger. The political consequences are too well known. The richest and most enlightened part of the world was left, undefended, to the assaults of every barbarous invader—to the brutality of Switzerland, the insolence of France, and the fierce rapacity of Arragon. The moral effects which followed from this state of things, were still more remarkable.

Among the rude nations which lay beyond the Alps, valour was absolutely indispensable. Without it, none could be eminent; few could be secure. Cowardice was, therefore, naturally considered as the foulest reproach. Among the polished Italians, enriched by commerce, governed by law, and passionately attached to literature, every thing was done by superiority of intelligence. Their very wars, more pacific than the peace of their neighbours, required rather civil than military qualifications. Hence, while courage was the point of honour in other countries, ingenuity became the point of honour in Italy.

From these principles were deduced, by processes strictly analogous, two opposite systems of fashionable morality.—Through the greater part of Europe, the vices which peculiarly belong to timid dispositions, and which are the natural defence of weakness, fraud and hypocrisy, have always been most disreputable. On the other hand, the excesses of haughty and daring spirits have been treated with indulgence, and even with respect. The Italians regarded with corresponding lenity those crimes which require self-command, address, quick observation, fertile invention, and profound knowledge of human nature.

Such a prince as our Henry the Fifth would have been the idol of the North. The follies of his youth, the selfish and desolating ambition of his manhood, the Lollards roasted at slow fires, the prisoners massacred on the field of battle, the expiring lease of priestcraft renewed for another century, the dreadful legacy of a causeless and hopeless war, bequeathed to a people who had no interest in its event, everything is forgotten, but the victory of Agincourt! Francis Sforza, on the other hand, was the model of the Italian hero. He made his employers and his rivals alike his tools. He first overpowered his open enemies by the help of faithless allies; he then armed himself against his allies with the spoils taken from his enemies. By his incomparable dexterity, he raised himself from the precarious and dependent situation of a military adventurer to the first throne of Italy. To such a man much was forgiven—hollow friendship, ungenerous enmity, violated faith. Such are the opposite errors which men commit, when their morality is not a science, but a taste; when they abandon eternal principles for accidental associations.

We have illustrated our meaning by an instance taken from history. We will select another from fiction. Othello murders his wife; he gives orders for the murder of his lieutenant; he ends by murdering himself. Yet he never loses the esteem and affection of a Northern reader—his intrepid and ardent spirit redeeming every thing. The unsuspecting confidence with which he listens to his adviser, the agony with which he shrinks from the thought of shame, the tempest of passion with which he commits his crimes, and the haughty fearlessness with which he avows them, give an extraordinary interest to his character. Iago, on the contrary, is the object of universal loathing. Many are inclined to suspect that Shakspeare has been seduced into an exaggeration unusual with him, and has drawn a monster who has no archetype in human nature. Now we suspect, that an Italian audience,

in the fifteenth century, would have felt very differently. Othello would have inspired nothing but detestation and contempt. The folly with which he trusts to the friendly professions of a man whose promotion he had obstructed—the credulity with which he takes unsupported assertions, and trivial circumstances, for unanswerable proofs,—the violence with which he silences the exculpation till the exculpation can only aggravate his misery, would have excited the abhorrence and disgust of the spectators. The conduct of Iago they would assuredly have condemned; but they would have condemned it as we condemn that of his victim. Something of interest and respect would have mingled with their disapprobation. The readiness of his wit, the clearness of his judgment, the skill with which he penetrates the dispositions of others and conceals his own, would have insured to him a certain portion of their esteem.

So wide was the difference between the Italians and their neighbours. A similar difference existed between the Greeks of the second century before Christ, and their masters the Romans. The conquerors, brave and resolute, faithful to their engagements, and strongly influenced by religious feelings, were, at the same time, ignorant, arbitrary, and cruel. With the vanquished people were deposited all the art, the science, and the literature of the Western world. In poetry, in philosophy, in painting, in architecture, in sculpture, they had no rivals. Their manners were polished, their perceptions acute, their invention ready; they were tolerant, affable, humane. But of courage and sincerity they were almost utterly destitute. The rude warriors who had subdued them, consoled themselves for their intellectual inferiority, by remarking that knowledge and taste seemed only to make men atheists, cowards, and slaves. The distinction long continued to be strongly marked, and furnished an admirable subject for the fierce sarcasms of Juvenal.

The citizen of an Italian commonwealth was the Greek of the time of Juvenal, and the Greek of the time of Pericles, joined in one. Like the former, he was timid and pliable, artful and unscrupulous. But, like the latter, he had a country. Its independence and prosperity were dear to him. If his character were degraded by some mean crimes, it was, on the other hand, ennobled by public spirit, and by an honourable ambition.

A vice sanctioned by the general opinion is merely a vice. The evil terminates in itself. A vice condemned by the general opinion produces a pernicious effect on the whole character. The former is a local malady, the latter a constitutional taint. When the reputation of the offender is lost, he too often flings the remains of his virtue after it in despair. The Highland gentleman who, a century ago, lived by taking black mail from his neighbours, committed the same crime for which Wild was accompanied to Tyburn by the huzzas of two hundred thousand people. But there can be no doubt that he was a much less depraved man than Wild. The deed for which Mrs. Brownrigg was hanged sinks into nothing, when compared with the conduct of the Roman who treated the public to a hundred pair of gladiators. Yet we should probably wrong such a Roman if we supposed that his disposition was so cruel as that of Mrs. Brownrigg. In our own country, a woman forfeits her place in society, by what, in a man, is too commonly considered as an honourable distinction, and, at worst, as a venial error. The consequence is notorious. The moral principle of a woman

is frequently more impaired by a single lapse from virtue, than that of a man by twenty years of intrigue. Classical antiquity would furnish us with instances stronger, if possible, than those to which we have referred.

We must apply this principle to the case before us. Habits of dissimulation and falsehood, no doubt, mark a man of our age and country as utterly worthless and abandoned. But it by no means follows that a similar judgment would be just in the case of an Italian of the middle ages. On the contrary, we frequently find those faults which we are accustomed to consider as certain indications of a mind altogether depraved, in company with great and good qualities, with generosity, with benevolence, with disinterestedness. From such a state of society, Palamedes, in the admirable dialogue of Hume, might have drawn illustrations of his theory as striking as any of those with which Fourli furnished him. These are not, we well know, the lessons which historians are generally most careful to teach, or readers most willing to learn. But they are not therefore useless. How Philip disposed his troops at Chæroneæ, where Hannibal crossed the Alps, whether Mary blew up Darnley, or Siquier shot Charles the Twelfth, and ten thousand other questions of the same description, are in themselves unimportant. The inquiry may amuse us, but the decision leaves us no wiser. He alone reads history aright, who, observing how powerfully circumstances influence the feelings and opinions of men, how often vices pass into virtues, and paradoxes into axioms, learns to distinguish what is accidental and transitory in human nature, from what is essential and immutable.

In this respect no history suggests more important reflections than that of the Tuscan and Lombard commonwealths. The character of the Italian statesman seems, at first sight, a collection of contradictions, a phantom as monstrous as the portress of hell in Milton, half divinity, half snake, majestic and beautiful above, grovelling and poisonous below. We see a man, whose thoughts and words have no connexion with each other; who never hesitates at an oath when he wishes to seduce, who never wants a pretext when he is inclined to betray. His cruelties spring, not from the heat of blood, or the insanity of uncontrolled power, but from deep and cool meditation. His passions, like well-trained troops, are impetuous by rule, and in their most headstrong fury never forget the discipline to which they have been accustomed. His whole soul is occupied with vast and complicated schemes of ambition. Yet his aspect and language exhibit nothing but philosophic moderation. Hatred and revenge eat into his heart:—Yet every look is a cordial smile, every gesture a familiar caress. He never excites the suspicion of his adversary by petty provocations. His purpose is disclosed only when it is accomplished. His face is unruffled, his speech is courteous, till vigilance is laid asleep, till a vital point is exposed, till a sure aim is taken; and then he strikes—for the first and last time. Military courage, the boast of the sottish German, the frivolous and prating Frenchman, the romantic and arrogant Spaniard, he neither possesses nor values. He shuns danger—not because he is insensible to shame, but because, in the society in which he lives, timidity has ceased to be shameful. To do an injury openly is, in his estimation, as wicked as to do it secretly—and far less profitable. With him the most honourable means are—the surest, the speediest, and the darkest. He cannot comprehend how a man should

scruple to deceive him whom he does not scruple to destroy. He would think it madness to declare open hostilities against a rival whom he might stab in a friendly embrace, or poison in a consecrated wafer.

Yet this man, black with the vices which *we* consider as most loathsome — traitor, hypocrite, coward, assassin — was by no means destitute even of those virtues which we generally consider as indicating superior elevation of character. In civil courage, in perseverance, in presence of mind, those barbarous warriors, who were foremost in the battle or the breach, were far his inferiors. Even the dangers which he avoided, with a caution almost pusillanimous, never confused his perceptions, never paralysed his inventive faculties, never wrung out one secret from his ready tongue and his inscrutable brow. Though a dangerous enemy, and a still more dangerous accomplice, he was a just and beneficent ruler. With so much unfairness in his policy, there was an extraordinary degree of fairness in his intellect. Indifferent to truth in the transactions of life, he was honestly devoted to the pursuit of truth in the researches of speculation. Wanton cruelty was not in his nature. On the contrary, where no political object was at stake, his disposition was soft and humane. The susceptibility of his nerves, and the activity of his imagination, inclined him to sympathize with the feelings of others, and to delight in the charities and courtesies of social life. Perpetually descending to actions which might seem to mark a mind diseased through all its faculties, he had nevertheless an exquisite sensibility, both for the natural and the moral sublime, for every graceful and every lofty conception. Habits of petty intrigue and dissimulation might have rendered him incapable of great general views, but that the expanding effect of his philosophical studies counteracted the narrowing tendency. He had the keenest enjoyment of wit, eloquence, and poetry. The fine arts profited alike by the severity of his judgment, and the liberality of his patronage. The portraits of some of the remarkable Italians of those times, are perfectly in harmony with this description. Ample and majestic foreheads; brows strong and dark, but not frowning; eyes of which the calm full gaze, while it expresses nothing, seems to discern every thing; cheeks pale with thought and sedentary habits; lips formed with feminine delicacy, but compressed with more than masculine decision — mark out men at once enterprising and apprehensive; men equally skilled in detecting the purposes of others, and in concealing their own; men who must have been formidable enemies and unsafe allies; but men, at the same time, whose tempers were mild and equable, and who possessed an amplitude and subtlety of mind which would have rendered them eminent either in active or in contemplative life, and fitted them either to govern or to instruct mankind.

Every age and every nation has certain characteristic vices, which prevail almost universally, which scarcely any person scruples to avow, and which even rigid moralists but faintly censure. Succeeding generations change the fashion of their morals, with their hats and their coaches; take some other kind of wickedness under their patronage, and wonder at the depravity of their ancestors. Nor is this all. Posterity, that high court of appeal, which is never tired of eulogizing its own justice and discernment, acts, on such occasions, like a Roman dictator after a general mutiny: Finding the delinquents too numerous to be all punished, it selects some of them at hazard, to bear the whole penalty of an offence in which they are not more deeply implicated than those who escape. Whether decimation be a convenient mode of

military execution, we know not ; but we solemnly protest against the introduction of such a principle into the philosophy of history.

In the present instance, the lot has fallen on Machiavelli ; a man whose public conduct was upright and honourable, whose views of morality, where they differed from those of the persons around him, seemed to have differed for the better, and whose only fault was, that, having adopted some of the maxims then generally received, he arranged them more luminously, and expressed them more forcibly, than any other writer.

Having now, we hope, in some degree cleared the personal character of Machiavelli, we come to the consideration of his works. As a poet, he is not entitled to a very high place. The *Decennali* are merely abstracts of the history of his own times in rhyme. The style and versification are sedulously modelled on those of Dante. But the manner of Dante, like that of every other great original poet, was suited only to his own genius, and to his own subject. The distorted and rugged diction which gives to his unearthly imagery a yet more unearthly character, and seems to proceed from a man labouring to express that which is inexpressible, is at once mean and extravagant, when misemployed by an imitator. The moral poems are in every point superior. That on Fortune, in particular, and that on Opportunity, exhibit both justness of thought and fertility of fancy. The *Golden Ass* has nothing but the name in common with the Romance of Apuleius — a book which, in spite of its irregular plan and its detestable style, is among the most fascinating in the Latin language, and in which the merits of Le Sage and Radcliffe, Bunyan and Crébillon, are singularly united. The Poem of Machiavelli, which is evidently unfinished, is carefully copied from the earlier Cantos of the *Inferno*. The writer loses himself in a wood. He is terrified by monsters, and relieved by a beautiful damsel. His protectress conducts him to a large menagerie of emblematical beasts, whose peculiarities are described at length. The manner as well as the plan of the *Divine Comedy* is carefully imitated. Whole lines are transferred from it. But they no longer produce their wonted effect. Virgil advises the husbandman who removes a plant from one spot to another to mark its bearings on the cork, and to place it in the same position with regard to the different points of the heaven in which it formerly stood. A similar care is necessary in poetical transplantation. Where it is neglected, we perpetually see the flowers of language, which have bloomed on one soil, wither on another. Yet the *Golden Ass* is not altogether destitute of merit. There is considerable ingenuity in the allegory, and some vivid colouring in the descriptions.

The Comedies deserve more attention. The *Mandragola*, in particular, is superior to the best of Goldoni, and inferior only to the best of Molière. It is the work of a man who, if he had devoted himself to the drama, would probably have attained the highest eminence, and produced a permanent and salutary effect on the national taste. This we infer, not so much from the degree, as from the kind of its excellence. There are compositions which indicate still greater talent, and which are perused with still greater delight, from which we should have drawn very different conclusions. Books quite worthless are quite harmless. The sure sign of the general decline of an art is the frequent occurrence, not of deformity, but of misplaced beauty. In general, tragedy is corrupted by eloquence, and comedy by wit.

The real object of the drama is the exhibition of the human character. This, we conceive, is no arbitrary canon, originating in local and temporary associations, like those which regulate the number of acts in a play, or of syllables in a line. It is the very essence of a species of a composition, in which every idea is coloured by passing through the medium of an imagined mind. To this fundamental law every other regulation is subordinate. The situations which most signally develop character form the best plot. The mother tongue of the passions is the best style.

This principle, rightly understood, does not debar the poet from any grace of composition. There is no style in which some man may not, under some circumstances, express himself. There is therefore no style which the drama rejects, none which it does not occasionally require. It is in the discernment of place, of time, and of person, that the inferior artists fail. The brilliant rhodomontade of Mercutio, the elaborate declamation of Antony, are, where Shakspeare has placed them, natural and pleasing. But Dryden would have made Mercutio challenge Tybalt, in hyperboles as fanciful as those in which he describes the chariot of Mab. Corneille would have represented Antony as scolding and coaxing Cleopatra with all the measured rhetoric of a funeral oration.

No writers have injured the Comedy of England so deeply as Congreve and Sheridan. Both were men of splendid wit and polished taste. Unhappily they made all their characters in their own likeness. Their works bear the same relation to the legitimate drama which a transparency bears to a painting: no delicate touches:—no hues imperceptibly fading into each other:—the whole is lighted up with an universal glare. Outlines and tints are forgotten in the common blaze which illuminates all. The flowers and fruits of the intellect abound; but it is the abundance of a jungle, not of a garden—unwholesome, bewildering, unprofitable from its very plenty, rank from its very fragrance. Every fop, every boor, every valet, is a man of wit. The very butts and dupes, Tattle, Urkwould, Puff, Acres, outshine the whole Hôtel de Rambouillet. To prove the whole system of this school absurd, it is only necessary to apply the test which dissolved the enchanted Florimel—to place the true by the false Thalia, to contrast the most celebrated characters which have been drawn by the writers of whom we speak, with the Bastard in King John or the Nurse in Romeo and Juliet. It was not surely from want of wit that Shakspeare adopted so different a manner. Benedick and Beatrice throw Mirabel and Millamant into the shade. All the good sayings of the facetious hours of Absolute and Surface might have been clipped from the single character of Falstaff without being missed. It would have been easy for that fertile mind to have given Bardolph and Shallow as much wit as Prince Hal, and to have made Dogberry and Verges retort on each other in sparkling epigrams. But he knew, to use his own admirable language, that such indiscriminate prodigality was ‘*from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was, and is, to hold, as it were, the mirror up to Nature.*’

This digression will enable our readers to understand what we mean when we say that, in the Mandragola, Machiavelli has proved that he completely understood the nature of the dramatic art, and possessed talents which would have enabled him to excel in it. By the correct and vigorous delineation of human nature, it produces interest without

a pleasing or skilful plot, and laughter without the least ambition of wit. The lover, not a very delicate or generous lover, and his adviser the parasite, are drawn with spirit. The hypocritical confessor is an admirable portrait. He is, if we mistake not, the original of Father Dominic, the best comic character of Dryden. But old Nicias is the glory of the piece. We cannot call to mind any thing that resembles him. The follies which Molière ridicules are those of affectation, not those of fatuity. Coxcombs and pedants, not simpletons, are his game. Shakspeare has indeed a vast assortment of fools; but the precise species of which we speak, is not, if we remember right, to be found there. Shallow is a fool. But his animal spirits supply, to a certain degree, the place of cleverness. His talk is to that of Sir John what soda-water is to champagne. It has the effervescence, though not the body or the flavour. Slender and Sir Andrew Aguecheek are fools, troubled with an uneasy consciousness of their folly, which, in the latter, produces a most edifying meekness and docility, and in the former, awkwardness, obstinacy, and confusion. Cloten is an arrogant fool, Osric a foppish fool, Ajax a savage fool; but Nicias is, as Thersites says of Patroclus, a fool positive. His mind is occupied by no strong feeling; it takes every character, and retains none; its aspect is diversified, not by passions, but by faint and transitory semblances of passion, a mock joy, a mock fear, a mock love, a mock pride, which chase each other like shadows over its surface, and vanish as soon as they appear. He is just idiot enough to be an object, not of pity or horror, but of ridicule. He bears some resemblance to poor Calandrino, whose mishaps, as recounted by Boccaccio, have made all Europe merry for more than four centuries. He perhaps resembles still more closely Simon de Villa, to whom Bruno and Buffalmacco promised the love of the Countess Civillari.* Nicias is, like Simon, of a learned profession; and the dignity with which he wears the doctoral fur, renders his absurdities infinitely more grotesque. The old Tuscan is the very language for such a being. Its peculiar simplicity gives even to the most forcible reasoning and the most brilliant wit an infantine air, generally delightful, but to a foreign reader sometimes a little ludicrous. Heroes and statesmen seem to lisp when they use it. It becomes Nicias incomparably, and renders all his silliness infinitely more silly.

We may add, that the verses with which the *Mandragola* is interspersed, appear to us to be the most spirited and correct of all that Machiavelli has written in metre. He seems to have entertained the same opinion; for he has introduced some of them in other places. The contemporaries of the author were not blind to the merits of this striking piece. It was acted at Florence with the greatest success. Leo the Tenth was among its admirers, and by his order it was represented at Rome.†

The *Clizia* is an imitation of the *Casina* of Plautus, which is itself an imitation of the lost *κλῆρουμένοι* of Diphilus. Plautus was, unquestionably, one of the best Latin writers. His works are copies; but they have in an extraordinary degree the air of originals. We infinitely

* Decameron, Giorn. viii. Nov. 9.

† Nothing can be more evident than that Paulus Jovius designates the *Mandragola* under the name of the Nicias. We should not have noticed what is so perfectly obvious, were it not that this natural and palpable misnomer has led the sagacious and industrious Bayle into a gross error.

prefer the slovenly exuberance of his fancy, and the clumsy vigour of his diction, to the artfully disguised poverty and elegant languor of Terence. But the *Casina* is by no means one of his best plays; nor is it one which offers great facilities to an imitator. The story is as alien from modern habits of life, as the manner in which it is developed from the modern fashion of composition. The lover remains in the country, and the heroine is locked up in her chamber during the whole action, leaving their fate to be decided by a foolish father, a cunning mother, and two knavish servants. Machiavelli has executed his task with judgment and taste. He has accommodated the plot to a different state of society, and has very dexterously connected it with the history of his own times. The relation of the trick put on the doting old lover is exquisitely humorous. It is far superior to the corresponding passage in the Latin comedy, and scarcely yields to the account which Falstaff gives of his ducking.

Two other comedies without titles, the one in prose, the other in verse, appear among the works of Machiavelli. The former is very short, lively enough, but of no great value. The latter we can scarcely believe to be genuine. Neither its merits nor its defects remind us of the reputed author. It was first printed in 1796, from a manuscript discovered in the celebrated library of the Strozzi. Its genuineness, if we have been rightly informed, is established solely by the comparison of hands. Our suspicions are strengthened by the circumstance, that the same manuscript contained a description of the plague of 1527, which has also, in consequence, been added to the works of Machiavelli. Of this last composition, the strongest external evidence would scarcely induce us to believe him guilty. Nothing was ever written more detestable, in matter and manner. The narrations, the reflections, the jokes, the lamentations, are all the very worst of their respective kinds, at once trite and affected,—threadbare tinsel from the Rag-fairs and Monmouth-streets of literature. A foolish schoolboy might perhaps write it, and, after he had written it, think it much finer than the incomparable introduction of the *Decameron*. But that a shrewd statesman, whose earliest works are characterized by manliness of thought and language, should, at nearly sixty years of age, descend to such puerility, is utterly inconceivable.

The little Novel of Belphegor is pleasantly conceived, and pleasantly told. But the extravagance of the satire in some measure injures its effect. Machiavelli was unhappily married; and his wish to avenge his own cause and that of his brethren in misfortune, carried him beyond even the license of fiction. Jonson seems to have combined some hints taken from this tale, with others from Boccacio, in the plot of *The Devil is an Ass*—a play which, though not the most highly finished of his compositions, is perhaps that which exhibits the strongest proofs of genius.

The political correspondence of Machiavelli, first published in 1767, is unquestionably genuine, and highly valuable. The unhappy circumstances in which his country was placed during the greater part of his public life, gave extraordinary encouragement to diplomatic talents. From the moment that Charles the Eighth descended from the Alps, the whole character of Italian politics was changed. The governments of the Peninsula ceased to form an independent system. Drawn from their old orbit by the attraction of the larger bodies which now approached them, they became mere satellites of France

and Spain. All their disputes, internal and external, were decided by foreign influence. The contests of opposite factions were carried on, not as formerly in the Senate House, or in the market-place, but in the antichambers of Louis and Ferdinand. Under these circumstances, the prosperity of the Italian States depended far more on the ability of their foreign agents, than on the conduct of those who were intrusted with the domestic administration. The ambassador had to discharge functions far more delicate than transmitting orders of knighthood, introducing tourists, or presenting his brethren with the homage of his high consideration. He was an advocate to whose management the dearest interests of his clients were intrusted, a spy clothed with an inviolable character. Instead of consulting the dignity of those whom he represented by a reserved manner and an ambiguous style, he was to plunge into all the intrigues of the court at which he resided, to discover and flatter every weakness of the prince who governed his employers, of the favourite who governed the prince, and of the lacquey who governed the favourite. He was to compliment the mistress and bribe the confessor, to panegyryze or supplicate, to laugh or weep, to accommodate himself to every caprice, to lull every suspicion, to treasure every hint, to be every thing, to observe every thing, to endure every thing. High as the art of political intrigue had been carried in Italy, these were times which required it all.

On these arduous errands a Machiavelli was frequently employed. He was sent to treat with the King of the Romans, and with the Duke of Valentinois. He was twice ambassador at the Court of Rome, and thrice at that of France. In these missions, and in several others of inferior importance, he acquitted himself with great dexterity. His despatches form one of the most amusing and instructive collections extant. We meet with none of the mysterious jargon so common in modern state-papers, the flash-language of political robbers and sharpers. The narratives are clear and agreeably written; the remarks on men and things clever and judicious. The conversations are reported in a spirited and characteristic manner. We find ourselves introduced into the presence of the men who, during twenty eventful years, swayed the destinies of Europe. Their wit and their folly, their fretfulness and their merriment are exposed to us. We are admitted to overhear their chat, and to watch their familiar gestures. It is interesting and curious to recognize, in circumstances which elude the notice of historians, the feeble violence and shallow cunning of Louis the Twelfth; the bustling insignificance of Maximilian, cursed with an impotent pruriency for renown, rash yet timid, obstinate yet fickle, always in a hurry, yet always too late;—the fierce and haughty energy which gave dignity to the eccentricities of Julius;—the soft and graceful manners which masked the insatiable ambition and the implacable hatred of Borgia.

We have mentioned Borgia. It is impossible not to pause for a moment on the name of a man in whom the political morality of Italy was so strongly personified, partially blended with the sterner lineaments of the Spanish character. On two important occasions Machiavelli was admitted to his society; once, at the moment when his splendid villany achieved its most signal triumph, when he caught in one snare and crushed at one blow all his most formidable rivals; and again when, exhausted by disease and overwhelmed by misfortunes which no human prudence could have averted, he was the

prisoner of the deadliest enemy of his house. These interviews between the greatest speculative and the greatest practical statesman of the age, are fully described in the correspondence, and form perhaps the most interesting part of it. From some passages in the *Prince*, and perhaps also from some indistinct traditions, several writers have supposed a connexion between those remarkable men much closer than ever existed. The Envoy has even been accused of prompting the crimes of the artful and merciless tyrant. But from the official documents it is clear that their intercourse, though ostensibly amicable, was in reality hostile. It cannot be doubted, however, that the imagination of Machiavelli was strongly impressed and his speculations on government coloured, by the observations which he made on the singular character, and equally singular fortunes, of a man who, under such disadvantages, had achieved such exploits; who, when sensuality, varied through innumerable forms, could no longer stimulate his sated mind, found a more powerful and durable excitement in the intense thirst of empire and revenge;—who emerged from the sloth and luxury of the Roman purple, the first prince and general of the age;—who, trained in an unwarlike profession, formed a gallant army out of the dregs of an unwarlike people;—who, after acquiring sovereignty by destroying his enemies, acquired popularity by destroying his tools;—who had begun to employ for the most salutary ends the power which he had attained by the most atrocious means; who tolerated within the sphere of his iron despotism no plunderer or oppressor but himself;—and who fell at last amidst the mingled curses and regrets of a people of whom his genius had been the wonder, and might have been the salvation. Some of those crimes of Borgia which to us appear the most odious, would not, from causes which we have already considered, have struck an Italian of the fifteenth century with equal horror. Patriotic feeling also might induce Machiavelli to look with some indulgence and regret on the memory of the only leader who could have defended the independence of Italy against the confederate spoilers of Cambray.

On this subject Machiavelli felt most strongly. Indeed the expulsion of the foreign tyrants, and the restoration of that golden age which had preceded the irruption of Charles the Eighth, were projects which, at that time, fascinated all the master-spirits of Italy. The magnificent vision delighted the great but ill-regulated mind of Julius. It divided with manuscripts and saucers, painters and falcons, the attention of the frivolous Leo. It prompted the generous treason of Morone. It imparted a transient energy to the feeble mind and body of the last Sforza. It excited for one moment an honest ambition in the false heart of Pescara. Ferocity and insolence were not among the vices of the national character. To the discriminating cruelties of politicians, committed for great ends on select victims, the moral code of the Italians was too indulgent. But though they might have recourse to barbarity as an expedient, they did not require it as a stimulant. They turned with loathing from the atrocity of the strangers who seemed to love blood for its own sake; who, not content with subjugating, were impatient to destroy; who found a fiendish pleasure in razing magnificent cities, cutting the throats of enemies who cried for quarter, or suffocating an unarmed people by thousands in the caverns to which they had fled for safety. Such were the scenes which daily excited the terror and disgust of a people, amongst whom, till lately, the worst

that a soldier had to fear in a pitched battle was the loss of his horse, and the expense of his ransom. The swinish intemperance of Switzerland, the wolfish avarice of Spain, the gross licentiousness of the French, indulged in violation of hospitality, of decency, of love itself, the wanton inhumanity which was common to all the invaders, had rendered them objects of deadly hatred to the inhabitants of the Peninsula.* The wealth which had been accumulated during centuries of prosperity and repose, was rapidly melting away. The intellectual superiority of the oppressed people only rendered them more keenly sensible of their political degradation. Literature and taste, indeed, still disguised with a flush of hectic loveliness and brilliancy the ravages of an incurable decay. The iron had not yet entered into the soul. The time was not yet come when eloquence was to be gagged, and reason to be hoodwinked—when the harp of the poet was to be hung on the willows of Arno, and the right hand of the painter to forget its cunning. Yet a discerning eye might even then have seen that genius and learning would not long survive the state of things from which they had sprung—that the great men whose talents gave lustre to that melancholy period had been formed under the influence of happier days, and would leave no successors behind them. The times which shine with the greatest splendour in literary history are not always those to which the human mind is most indebted. Of this we may be convinced, by comparing the generation which follows them, with that which preceded them. The first fruits which are reaped under a bad system, often spring from seed sown under a good one. Thus it was, in some measure, with the Augustan age. Thus it was with the age of Raphael and Ariosto, of Aldus and Vida.

Machiavelli deeply regretted the misfortunes of his country, and clearly discerned the cause and the remedy. It was the military system of the Italian people which had extinguished their valour and discipline, and rendered their wealth an easy prey to every foreign plunderer. The Secretary projected a scheme, alike honourable to his heart and to his intellect, for abolishing the use of mercenary troops, and organizing a national militia.

The exertions which he made to effect this great object ought alone to rescue his name from obloquy. Though his situation and his habits were pacific, he studied with intense assiduity the theory of war. He made himself master of all its details. The Florentine government entered into his views. A council of war was appointed. Levies were decreed. The indefatigable minister flew from place to place in order to superintend the execution of his design. The times were, in some respects, favourable to the experiment. The system of military tactics had undergone a great revolution. The cavalry was no longer considered as forming the strength of an army. The hours which a citizen could spare from his ordinary employments, though by no means sufficient to familiarize him with the exercise of a man-at-arms, might render him an useful foot-soldier. The dread of a foreign yoke, of plunder, massacre, and conflagration, might have conquered that repugnance to military pursuits, which both the industry and the idleness of great towns commonly generate. For a time the scheme promised

* The opening stanzas of the Fourteenth Canto of the *Orlando Furioso*, give a frightful picture of the state of Italy in those times. Yet, strange to say, Ariosto is speaking of the conduct of those who called themselves Allies.

well. The new troops acquitted themselves respectably in the field. Machiavelli looked with parental rapture on the success of his plan; and began to hope that the arms of Italy might once more be formidable to the barbarians of the Tagus and the Rhine. But the tide of misfortune came on before the barriers which should have withstood it were prepared. For a time, indeed, Florence might be considered as peculiarly fortunate. Famine and sword and pestilence had devastated the fertile plains and stately cities of the Po. All the curses denounced of old against Tyre seemed to have fallen on Venice. Her merchants already stood afar off, lamenting for their great city. The time seemed near when the sea-weed should overgrow her silent Rialto, and the fisherman wash his nets in her deserted arsenal. Naples had been four times conquered and reconquered, by tyrants equally indifferent to its welfare, and equally greedy for its spoils. Florence, as yet, had only to endure degradation and extortion, to submit to the mandates of foreign powers, to buy over and over again, at an enormous price, what was already justly her own—to return thanks for being wronged, and to ask pardon for being in the right. She was at length deprived of the blessings even of this infamous and servile repose. Her military and political institutions were swept away together. The Medici returned, in the train of foreign invaders, from their long exile. The policy of Machiavelli was abandoned; and his public services were requited with poverty, imprisonment, and torture.

The fallen statesman still clung to his project with unabated ardour. With the view of vindicating it from some popular objections, and of refuting some prevailing errors on the subject of military science, he wrote his seven books on the Art of War. This excellent work is in the form of a dialogue. The opinions of the Writer are put into the mouth of Fabrizio Colonna, a powerful nobleman of the Ecclesiastical State, and an officer of distinguished merit in the service of the King of Spain. He visits Florence on his way from Lombardy to his own domains. He is invited to meet some friends at the house of Cosimo Rucellui, an amiable and accomplished young man, whose early death Machiavelli feelingly deplores. After partaking of an elegant entertainment, they retire from the heat into the most shady recesses of the garden. Fabrizio is struck by the sight of some uncommon plants. His host informs him that, though rare in modern days, they are frequently mentioned by the classical authors, and that his grandfather, like many other Italians, amused himself with practising the ancient methods of gardening. Fabrizio expresses his regret that those who, in later times, affected the manners of the old Romans, should select for imitation their most trifling pursuits. This leads to a conversation on the decline of military discipline, and on the best means of restoring it. The institution of the Florentine militia is ably defended; and several improvements are suggested in the details.

The Swiss and the Spaniards were, at that time, regarded as the best soldiers in Europe. The Swiss battalion consisted of pikemen, and bore a close resemblance to the Greek phalanx. The Spaniards, like the soldiers of Rome, were armed with the sword and the shield. The victories of Flaminius and Æmilius over the Macedonian kings seem to prove the superiority of the weapons used by the legions. The same experiment had been recently tried with the same result at the battle of Ravenna, one of those tremendous days into which human folly and wickedness compress the whole devastation of a famine or a plague. In that memorable conflict, the infantry of Arragon, the old

companions of Gonsalvo, deserted by all their allies, hewed a passage through the thickest of the imperial pikes, and effected an unbroken retreat, in the face of the gend'armerie of De Foix, and the renowned artillery of Este. Fabrizio, or rather Machiavelli, proposes to combine the two systems, to arm the foremost lines with the pike, for the purpose of repulsing cavalry, and those in the rear with the sword, as being a weapon better adapted for every purpose. Throughout the work, the author expresses the highest admiration of the military science of the ancient Romans, and the greatest contempt for the maxims which had been in vogue amongst the Italian commanders of the preceding generation. He prefers infantry to cavalry, and fortified camps to fortified towns. He is inclined to substitute rapid movements and decisive engagements for the languid and dilatory operations of his countrymen. He attaches very little importance to the invention of gunpowder. Indeed he seems to think that it ought scarcely to produce any change in the mode of arming or of disposing troops. The general testimony of historians, it must be allowed, seems to prove, that the ill-constructed and ill-served artillery of those times, though useful in a siege, was of little value on the field of battle.

Of the tactics of Machiavelli we will not venture to give an opinion: but we are certain that his book is most able and interesting. As a commentary on the history of his times, it is invaluable. The ingenuity, the grace, and the perspicuity of the style, and the eloquence and animation of particular passages, must give pleasure even to readers who take no interest in the subject.

The *Prince* and the Discourses on Livy were written after the fall of the Republican Government. The former was dedicated to the young Lorenzo de Medici. This circumstance seems to have disgusted the contemporaries of the writer far more than the doctrines which have rendered the name of the work odious in later times. It was considered as an indication of political apostasy. The fact however seems to have been, that Machiavelli, despairing of *the liberty* of Florence, was inclined to support any government which might preserve her *independence*. The interval which separated a democracy and a despotism, Soderini and Lorenzo, seemed to vanish when compared with the difference between the former and the present state of Italy, between the security, the opulence, and the repose which it had enjoyed under its native rulers, and the misery in which it had been plunged since the fatal year in which the first foreign tyrant had descended from the Alps. The noble and pathetic exhortation with which the *Prince* concludes, shows how strongly the writer felt upon this subject.

The *Prince* traces the progress of an ambitious Man, the Discourses the progress of an ambitious People. The same principles on which, in the former work, the elevation of an individual is explained, are applied, in the latter, to the longer duration and more complex interests of a society. To a modern statesman the form of the Discourses may appear to be puerile. In truth Livy is not a historian on whom much reliance can be placed, even in cases where he must have possessed considerable means of information. And his first Decade, to which Machiavelli has confined himself, is scarcely entitled to more credit than our Chronicle of British Kings who reigned before the Roman invasion. But his commentator is indebted to him for little more than a few texts which he might as easily have extracted from the Vulgate or the Decameron. The whole train of thought is original.

On the peculiar immorality which has rendered the *Prince* unpopular, and which is almost equally discernible in the Discourses, we have already given our opinion at length. We have attempted to show that it belonged rather to the age than to the man, that it was a partial taint, and by no means implied general depravity. We cannot however deny that it is a great blemish, and that it considerably diminishes the pleasure which, in other respects, those works must afford to every intelligent mind.

It is, indeed, impossible to conceive a more healthful and vigorous constitution of the understanding than that which these works indicate. The qualities of the active and the contemplative statesman appear to have been blended, in the mind of the writer, into a rare and exquisite harmony. His skill in the details of business had not been acquired at the expense of his general powers. It had not rendered his mind less comprehensive; but it had served to correct his speculations, and to impart to them that vivid and practical character which so widely distinguishes them from the vague theories of most political philosophers.

Every man who has seen the world knows that nothing is so useless as a general maxim. If it be very moral and very true, it may serve for a copy to a charity-boy. If, like those of Rochefoucault, it be sparkling and whimsical, it may make an excellent motto for an essay. But few, indeed, of the many wise apophthegms which have been uttered, from the time of the Seven Sages of Greece to that of Poor Richard, have prevented a single foolish action. We give the highest and the most peculiar praise to the precepts of Machiavelli, when we say that they may frequently be of real use in regulating conduct—not so much because they are more just, or more profound, than those which might be culled from other authors, as because they can be more readily applied to the problems of real life.

There are errors in these works. But they are errors which a writer, situated like Machiavelli, could scarcely avoid. They arise, for the most part, from a single defect which appears to us to pervade his whole system. In his political scheme, the means had been more deeply considered than the ends. The great principle, that societies and laws exist only for the purpose of increasing the sum of private happiness, is not recognised with sufficient clearness. The good of the body, distinct from the good of the members, and sometimes hardly compatible with it, seems to be the object which he proposes to himself. Of all political fallacies, this has had the widest and the most mischievous operation. The state of society in the little commonwealths of Greece, the close connexion and mutual dependence of the citizens, and the severity of the laws of war, tended to encourage an opinion which, under such circumstances, could hardly be called erroneous. The interests of every individual were inseparably bound up with those of the state. An invasion destroyed his corn-fields and vineyards, drove him from his home, and compelled him to encounter all the hardships of a military life. A peace restored him to security and comfort. A victory doubled the number of his slaves. A defeat perhaps made him a slave himself. When Pericles, in the Peloponnesian war, told the Athenians that, if their country triumphed, their private losses would speedily be repaired; but that, if their arms failed of success, every individual amongst them would probably be ruined*,—he spoke no

* Thucydides, ii. 62.

more than the truth. He spoke to men whom the tribute of vanquished cities supplied with food and clothing, with the luxury of the bath and the amusements of the theatre, on whom the greatness of their country conferred rank, and before whom the members of less prosperous communities trembled ;—and to men who, in case of a change in the public fortunes, would, at least, be deprived of every comfort, and every distinction which they enjoyed. To be butchered on the smoking ruins of their city — to be dragged in chains to a slave-market — to see one child torn from them to dig in the quarries of Sicily, and another to guard the harams of Persepolis — those were the frequent and probable consequences of national calamities. Hence, among the Greeks, patriotism became a governing principle, or rather an ungovernable passion. Both their legislators and their philosophers took it for granted, that, in providing for the strength and greatness of the state, they sufficiently provided for the happiness of the people. The writers of the Roman empire lived under despots, into whose dominion a hundred nations were melted down, and whose gardens would have covered the little commonwealths of Phlius and Plataea. Yet they continued to employ the same language, and to cant about the duty of sacrificing every thing to a country to which they owed nothing.

Causes similar to those which had influenced the disposition of the Greeks, operated powerfully on the less vigorous and daring character of the Italians. They, too, were members of small communities. Every man was deeply interested in the welfare of the society to which he belonged, — a partaker in its wealth and its poverty, in its glory and its shame. In the age of Machiavelli, this was peculiarly the case. Public events had produced an immense sum of money to private citizens. The Northern invaders had brought want to their boards, infamy to their beds, fire to their roofs, and the knife to their throats. It was natural that a man who lived in times like these, should overrate the importance of those measures by which a nation is rendered formidable to its neighbours, and undervalue those which make it prosperous within itself.

Nothing is more remarkable, in the political treatises of Machiavelli, than the fairness of mind which they indicate. It appears where the author is in the wrong, almost as strongly as where he is in the right. He never advances a false opinion because it is new or splendid, because he can clothe it in a happy phrase, or defend it by an ingenious sophism. His errors are at once explained, by a reference to the circumstances in which he was placed. They evidently were not sought out ; they lay in his way, and could scarcely be avoided. Such mistakes must necessarily be committed by early speculators in every science.

In this respect, it is amusing to compare the *Prince* and the *Discourses* with the *Spirit of Laws*. Montesquieu enjoys, perhaps, a wider celebrity than any political writer of modern Europe. Something he doubtless owes to his merit, but much more to his fortune. He had the good luck of a valentine. He caught the eye of the French nation, at the moment when it was waking from the long sleep of political and religious bigotry ; and, in consequence, he became a favourite. The English, at that time, considered a Frenchman who talked about constitutional checks and fundamental laws as a prodigy not less astonishing than the learned pig or the musical infant. Specious but shallow, studious of effect, indifferent to truth, eager to

build a system, but careless of collecting those materials out of which alone a sound and durable system can be built, he constructed theories as rapidly, and as slightly, as card-houses, — no sooner projected than completed — no sooner completed than blown away — no sooner blown away than forgotten. Machiavelli errs only because his experience, acquired in a very peculiar state of society, could not always enable him to calculate the effect of institutions differing from those of which he had observed the operation. Montesquieu errs, because he has a fine thing to say, and is resolved to say it. If the phenomena which lie before him will not suit his purpose, all history must be ransacked. If nothing established by authentic testimony can be raked or chipped to suit his Procrustean hypothesis, he puts up with some monstrous fable about Siam, or Bantam, or Japan, told by writers compared with whom Lucian and Gulliver were veracious — liars by a double right, as travellers and as Jesuits.

Propriety of thought, and propriety of diction, are commonly found together. Obscurity and affectation are the two greatest faults of style. Obscurity of expression generally springs from confusion of ideas ; and the same wish to dazzle, at any cost, which produces affectation in the manner of a writer, is likely to produce sophistry in his reasonings. The judicious and candid mind of Machiavelli shows itself in his luminous, manly, and polished language. The style of Montesquieu, on the other hand, indicates in every page a lively and ingenious, but an unsound mind. Every trick of expression, from the mysterious conciseness of an oracle to the flippancy of a Parisian coxcomb, is employed to disguise the fallacy of some positions, and the triteness of others. Absurdities are brightened into epigrams ; — truisms are darkened into enigmas. It is with difficulty that the strongest eye can sustain the glare with which some parts are illuminated, or penetrate the shade in which others are concealed.

The political works of Machiavelli derive a peculiar interest from the mournful earnestness which he manifests whenever he touches on topics connected with the calamities of his native land. It is difficult to conceive any situation more painful than that of a great man, condemned to watch the lingering agony of an exhausted country, to tend it during the alternate fits of stupefaction and raving which precede its dissolution, to see the symptoms of vitality disappear one by one, till nothing is left but coldness, darkness, and corruption. To this joyless and thankless duty was Machiavelli called. In the energetic language of the prophet, he was ‘ mad for the sight of his eyes which he saw ’ — disunion in the council, effeminacy in the camp, liberty extinguished, commerce decaying, national honour sullied, an enlightened and flourishing people given over to the ferocity of ignorant savages. Though his opinions had not escaped the contagion of that political immorality which was common among his countrymen, his natural disposition seems to have been rather stern and impetuous than pliant and artful. When the misery and degradation of Florence, and the foul outrage which he had himself sustained raised his mind, the smooth craft of his profession and his nation is exchanged for the honest bitterness of scorn and anger. He speaks like one sick of the calamitous times and abject people among whom his lot is cast. He pines for the strength and glory of ancient Rome, for the fasces of Brutus and the sword of Scipio, the gravity of the curule chair, and the bloody pomp of the triumphal sacrifice. He seems to be transported back to the days when eight hundred thousand Italian warriors

sprung to arms at the rumour of a Gallic invasion. He breathes all the spirit of those intrepid and haughty patricians, who forgot the dearest ties of nature in the claims of public duty, who looked with disdain on the elephants and on the gold of Pyrrhus, and listened with unaltered composure to the tremendous tidings of Cannæ. Like an ancient temple deformed by the barbarous architecture of a later age, his character acquires an interest from the very circumstances which debase it. The original proportions are rendered more striking by the contrast which they present to the mean and incongruous additions.

The influence of the sentiments which we have described, was not apparent in his writings alone. His enthusiasm, barred from the career which it would have selected for itself, seems to have found a vent in desperate levity. He enjoyed a vindictive pleasure in outraging the opinions of a society which he despised. He became careless of those decencies which were expected from a man so highly distinguished in the literary and political world. The sarcastic bitterness of his conversation disgusted those who were more inclined to accuse his licentiousness than their own degeneracy, and who were unable to conceive the strength of those emotions which are concealed by the jests of the wretched, and by the follies of the wise.

The historical works of Machiavelli still remain to be considered. The life of Castruccio Castracani will occupy us for a very short time, and would scarcely have demanded our notice, had it not attracted a much greater share of public attention than it deserves. Few books, indeed, could be more interesting than a careful and judicious account, from such a pen, of the illustrious Prince of Lucca, the most eminent of those Italian chiefs, who, like Pisistratus and Gelon, acquired a power felt rather than seen, and resting, not on law or on prescription, but on the public favour and on their great personal qualities. Such a work would exhibit to us the real nature of that species of sovereignty, so singular, and so often misunderstood, which the Greeks denominated *tyranny*, and which, modified in some degree by the feudal system, re-appeared in the commonwealths of Lombardy and Tuscany. But this little composition of Machiavelli is in no sense a history. It has no pretensions to fidelity. It is a trifle, and not a very successful trifle. It is scarcely more authentic than the novel of Belphegor, and is very much duller.

The last great work of this illustrious man was the History of his native city. It was written by the command of the Pope, who, as chief of the house of Medici, was at that time sovereign of Florence. The characters of Cosmo, of Piero, and of Lorenzo, are, however, treated with a freedom and impartiality equally honourable to the writer and to the patron. The miseries and humiliations of dependence, the bread which is more bitter than every other food, the stairs which are more painful than every other ascent*, had not broken the spirit of Machiavelli. The most corrupting post in a corrupting profession, had not depraved the generous heart of Clement.

The History does not appear to be the fruit of much industry or research. It is unquestionably inaccurate. But it is elegant, lively, and picturesque, beyond any other in the Italian language. The reader, we believe, carries away from it a more vivid and a more faithful impression of the national character and manners than from more correct accounts. The truth is, that the book belongs rather to ancient

* Dante Paradiso, Canto xvii.

than to modern literature. It is in the style, not of Davila and Clarendon, but of Herodotus and Tacitus: and the classical histories may almost be called romances founded in fact. The relation is, no doubt, in all its principal points, strictly true. But the numerous little incidents which heighten the interest, the words, the gestures, the looks, are evidently furnished by the imagination of the author. The fashion of later times is different. A more exact narrative is given by the writer. It may be doubted whether more exact notions are conveyed to the reader. The best portraits are those in which there is a slight mixture of caricature; and we are not aware, that the best histories are not those in which a little of the exaggeration of fictitious narrative is judiciously employed. Something is lost in accuracy; but much is gained in effect. The fainter lines are neglected; but the great characteristic features are imprinted on the mind for ever.

The History terminates with the death of Lorenzo de Medici. Machiavelli had, it seems, intended to continue it to a later period. But his death prevented the execution of his design; and the melancholy task of recording the desolation and shame of Italy devolved on Guicciardini.

Machiavelli lived long enough to see the commencement of the last struggle for Florentine liberty. Soon after his death, monarchy was finally established,—not such a monarchy as that of which Cosmo had laid the foundations deep in the constitution and feelings of his countrymen, and which Lorenzo had embellished with the trophies of every science and every art; but a loathsome tyranny, proud and mean, cruel and feeble, bigotted and lascivious. The character of Machiavelli was hateful to the new masters of Italy; and those parts of his theory which were in strict accordance with their own daily practice, afforded a pretext for blackening his memory. His works were misrepresented by the learned, misconstrued by the ignorant, censured by the church, abused, with all the rancour of simulated virtue, by the minions of a base despotism, and the priests of a baser superstition. The name of the man whose genius had illuminated all the dark places of policy, and to whose patriotic wisdom an oppressed people had owed their last chance of emancipation and revenge, passed into a proverb of infamy. For more than two hundred years his bones lay undistinguished. At length, an English nobleman paid the last honours to the greatest statesman of Florence. In the Church of Santa Croce, a monument was erected to his memory, which is contemplated with reverence by all who can distinguish the virtues of a great mind through the corruptions of a degenerate age;—and which will be approached with still deeper homage when the object to which his public life was devoted shall be attained,—when the foreign yoke shall be broken, when a second Proccita shall avenge the wrongs of Naples, when a happier Rienzi shall restore the good estate of Rome, when the streets of Florence and Bologna shall again resound with their ancient war cry—*Popolo; popolo; muoiano i tiranni!* *

* The character of Machiavelli is beautifully and graphically delineated in the Review of the first part of Dugald Stewart's Introduction to the Encyclopædia Britannica. The article displays great and various erudition, contains several masterly sketches of our most distinguished Philosophers, and is written with power, dignity, and elegance. It was contributed by Sir James Mackintosh. See Vol. xxvii. page 209.

JEFFERSON.*

JEFFERSON'S understanding and character were of a plain, bold, and practical cast—full of activity and strength. But neither in his politics, science, or literature, do we see any sign of genius or depth. His speculations are chiefly interesting from our curiosity to learn the opinions of so celebrated a person. There is scarce a tincture visible from first to last, among all his multifarious disquisitions, of real philosophical sagacity, inventive observation, or refinement of taste. Independent and incorruptible himself, he was proud of the virtue of the party with which he acted, and confident in his belief that the popular will, whilst unvitiated by the perverse laws and corrupt habits of communities where commerce and distinction of orders had prevailed, might be trusted as the sole principle of government. This personal uprightness, and this confiding reliance in the trustworthiness of human nature, under such circumstances, at least, as the population of the United States is placed in, are in singular contrast with the boundless suspicions he is always brooding over in the case of his federal opponents, and the sweeping denunciations which he promulgates against the privileged classes of Europe.

We have seen that he was constantly pining after what he felt to be his true vocation. The interest which attends the literary pursuits and opinions of men eminent in the practical part of life, has led us to look attentively for the traces of them scattered up and down these volumes. They show him to have been so plainly destined for an enterprising scholar, rather than a master, that we cannot count him as one of the sacrifices which, in free countries, the sciences are always offering up at the altar of patriotism or ambition. The *Notes on Virginia* (his only professed work) were originally written as answers to some questions put to him by a foreigner. A French translation of some private copies having appeared, their publication in 1787 became scarcely a matter of choice. They contain a great deal of useful knowledge, told very agreeably. But the most striking thing about them, is the evidence which they give of some secret force of character behind, by producing an effect out of all proportion either with the real importance of the subject, or any apparent superiority in the author. There is a weightiness, certainly, always in good sense, when it is at once earnest and unpretending. But sincerity and moral courage are imposing auxiliaries; and these great characteristics of his mind were not more strongly exhibited in after life, than in the directness with which he here tells the Virginians what he thinks the truth, on such irritable questions as slavery and their own defective constitution, however unpalatable the truths might be.

Jefferson, as the friend of La Fayette, and the representative of a country whose revolutionary precedent was regarded as so perfect a model, that its authority was 'treated like that of the Bible, open to explanation, but not to question,' had extraordinary opportunities, whilst at Paris, of ascertaining the course which the French Revolution was about to take. His opinions, however, rose and fell with the

* Jefferson's Memoirs and Correspondence. Now first published from the Original Manuscripts. Edited by Thomas Jefferson Randolph. 4 Vols. 8vo. London 1829.—Vol. li. page 496. July, 1830.

events of the day; and though he made all proper allowances for 'three ages without national morality,' and thought that the generation of Frenchmen who began that bold experiment were not sufficiently virtuous and enlightened themselves to reap the fruits of it, yet he left France, satisfied that all would end happily in a year. His criticisms in philosophy frequently evince as little foresight and comprehensiveness as his most sanguine political anticipations. He informs us of an Abbé at Paris, in 1788, who had shaken, if not destroyed, the received theory for explaining the phenomenon of the rainbow. He considers the merit of Herschell to be confined to that of being a good optician only. He had not the prejudice of Buffon to speak of chemistry as a kind of cookery, and to put the laboratory on a footing with the kitchen; but he censures Lavoisiere's attempt at introducing a systematic nomenclature, as probably an age too soon, and as calculated to retard the progress of science by a jargon, in which the reformation of this year must be again reformed the next. Not being fond of merely abstract reading, it is not singular that he should, apparently, have had no fixed opinions on the metaphysics of morals: since they are important only as a matter of abstract reasoning; for nature, fortunately, has taken care that a difference in our premises here makes no difference in our conclusion. In one place it is said, that 'morals are too essential to the happiness of man, to be risked on the uncertain combinations of the head. She laid their foundation, therefore, in sentiment, not in science. For one man of science, there are thousands who are not. What would have become of them? The moral sense is as much a part of a man as his leg or arm. State a moral case to a ploughman and a professor,' &c. Afterwards, thanking Dr. Price for a copy of his book, he agrees, 'we may well admit morality to be the child of the understanding, rather than of the senses, when we observe that it becomes dear to us as the latter weaken, and as the former grows stronger by time and experience, till the hour arrives in which all other objects lose their value.' At a later period, he returns to the belief, that a moral sense is as much a part of our constitution as the sense of seeing. Our English moralists will be more surprised at the standard work on this subject, which, when writing to his ward, he puts at the head of the good books that are to encourage and direct his feelings. 'The writings of Sterne, particularly, form the best course of morality that ever was written.'

Jefferson was American to the back bone. A boiling temperament would make him naturally 'a good hater;' but a love of his country, and what he supposed to be her interests, steadily guided him in choosing the objects of his antipathy. His general thirst for knowledge was under the influence of the same passion, and mainly directed to those sources which were likely to satisfy not only his curiosity, but his patriotic feelings. His investigations into Climate conclude with a preference of that of America (principally on account of its greater clearness) over that of the parts of Europe with which he was acquainted. His reasonable denial of the theory, by which Raynal supposes that Europeans migrating to America must degenerate, leads him to question also the fact, as copied by De Pauw and Robertson from Ulloa, of the inferiority of the native Indians; and to doubt as an unwarrantable assumption, the excess of moisture, to which Buffon had attributed this result. Jefferson had collected, at one time, fifty vocabularies of the aboriginal tribes within his reach, extending to

about two hundred and fifty words. Of these about seventy-three words were common to the Asiatic lists of one hundred and thirty words, as formed by Pallas. A comparison of languages seems the only chance of furnishing something like a key among the hundred theories concerning the origin of the Indian tribes. But there was also a stimulating encouragement in the suspicion Jefferson entertained, that farther investigations would show a greater number of radical languages among the nations of America, than among those of the other hemisphere. It will be poor consolation to the melancholy remnants, gradually driven towards the western side of the Mississippi, to learn that they come, if of a poor family, yet of an ancient house. On another question, the right of the Anglo-Americans to invent new words towards recruiting the English language, we readily admit their title to be quite equal to our own. As yet, however, no proof of their 'process of sound euologisation' has reached us, by which we can recognise that any progress has 'been made towards furnishing, after the Ionians, a second example of a colonial dialect improving on its 'primitive.' The following burst of philological admiration represents so little our own opinion of the two languages which it compares, that we must look elsewhere for a judge on the successfulness of any such experiment. 'What a language has the French become since the date of their Revolution, by the free introduction of new words! The most copious and eloquent in the living world, and equal to the Greek, had not that been regularly modifiable almost *ad infinitum*.' In case the malignant saying, that their Adam and Eve came out of Newgate, should be assumed by any body as a fact explanatory of any supposed peculiarity in their national character or speech, the proportion of the people to whom this disreputable pedigree can apply, is mentioned as far too small to have left any trace. Two thousand are stated to be the whole number of malefactors sent out; and four thousand to be more than they and their descendants at the declaration of independence.

Nobody was ever more aware than Jefferson of the difficulty of maintaining a republican form of government under any circumstances, and of the impossibility of doing so, except under the most favourable. The singular disposition of men to quarrel and divide into parties, after the experience of America, in 'the Committee of States' and the example of the Directory of France, he considered to be an element in human nature, fatal to the existence of any executive consisting of a plurality. It was on the first of these occasions, that Franklin, illustrating his opinion, as usual, under an apologue, told him the story of the two men, left in charge of Eddystone Lighthouse for the winter, who were found not on speaking terms with each other in the spring. A community of Tories would still find cause of contention; but the seeds of schism exist still more positively in the fact, that 'the parties of Whig and Tory are those of nature. They exist in all countries, whether called by these names or by those of Aristocrats and Democrats,—*Côté droite* and *Côté gauche*,—Ultras and Radicals,—Serviles and Liberals. The sickly, weakly, timid man, fears the people, and is a Tory by nature. The healthy, strong, and bold, cherishes them, and is a Whig by nature.' The distinction thus stated, imposes upon the most ardent enthusiasts for freedom, the necessity of enquiring in each case what is the character of the people, and how far it can be trusted with the reins. Much will depend, in the first instance, on our general view of human nature, and on the

probability of its approaching any greater degree of perfection than it has hitherto attained. Jefferson, speaking of Washington, says, ‘ He has often declared to me, that he considered our new constitution as an experiment on the practicability of republican government, and with what dose of liberty man could be trusted for his own good ; that he was determined the experiment should have a fair trial ; and he would lose the last drop of his blood in support of it. I do not believe that he had not a firm confidence in the durability of our government. He was naturally distrustful of men, and inclined to gloomy apprehensions ; and I was ever persuaded, that a belief that we must at length end in something like a British Constitution, had some weight in his adoption of the ceremonies of levees, &c., calculated to prepare us for a change which he believed possible ; and to let it come on with as little shock as might be to the public mind.’ According to Jefferson, Washington had less confidence in the capability of man for political self-government than Jefferson had himself — Adams less than Washington — and Hamilton less than Adams. These were the shades of difference, which the fury of party deepened, from time to time, into the darkest contrasts under the most odious suspicions. Jefferson’s own confidence, indeed, is in man only as he is found in America, and there only for a season. Agricultural habits and education are laid down as the two indispensable conditions. In his own, as in other countries, the question is, not what we wish, but what is practicable. Of South America, its independence being achieved, he puts, as the next question, ‘ and a very serious one, What will then become of them ? Ignorance and bigotry, like other insanities, are incapable of self-government. I do believe it would be better for them to obtain freedom by degrees only.’ He afterwards prescribes certain things as a good beginning, particularly Trial by Jury,—‘ as the school in which their people might begin to learn the exercise of civil duties as well as rights.’ Mr. Bentham will probably smile to find him praising Jury Trial as the firmest bulwark of English liberty. ‘ Were I called upon to decide whether the people had best be omitted in the legislative or judiciary department, I would say, It is better to leave them out of the legislative. The execution of the laws is more important than the making them.’ In a letter to Paine, 1789, he expresses his apprehension that a majority of the States-General cannot be induced to adopt this form of trial,—‘ the only anchor ever yet imagined by man, by which a government can be held to the principles of its constitution.’ At this period he considered the French to be unprepared even for the protection of the Habeas Corpus act ; and gave a curious specimen of his good faith by excepting the nobles out of a clause for the security of personal liberty, inserted by him in a charter of rights, which he then sketched out for the consideration of the patriots. Long afterwards he quotes to Madame de Stael the constitution of 1789, as sufficient for liberty and prosperity, ‘ if wisdom could but have stayed at that point the fervid but imprudent zeal of men who did not know the character of their own countrymen.’ Reminding La Fayette of their discussions at that day, he admits that the people proved equal to the constitution of 1791 ; and fixes as the fatal error of the republicans (closet politicians merely, unpractised in the knowledge of men) their separation from the constitutionalists, under the idea that more could be obtained and borne. ‘ They did not weigh the hazards of a transition from one

' form of government to another ; the value of what they had already
 ' rescued from those hazards, and might hold in security if they
 ' pleased ; nor the imprudence of giving up the certainty of such a
 ' degree of liberty, under a limited monarchy, for the uncertainty of a
 ' little more under the form of a republic. Whether the state of
 ' society in Europe can bear a republican government, I doubted, you
 ' know, when with you, and I do now.' It is some comfort that we
 are advancing quicker than he once expected. In 1786, he found in
 France oppression of body and mind, in every form, so firmly settled
 in the mass of the people, that their redemption from them could never
 be hoped. ' If all the sovereigns of Europe were to set themselves to
 ' work to emancipate the minds of their subjects from their present
 ' ignorance and prejudices, and that as zealously as they now endea-
 ' vour the contrary, a thousand years would not place them on that
 ' high ground on which our common people are now setting out. The
 ' people of England, I think, are less oppressed than here. But it
 ' needs but half an eye to see, when among them, that the foundation
 ' is laid in their dispositions for the establishment of a despotism.' In
 1823, agreeing with Adams on the difficulties of a revolution from
 despotism to freedom, and that the generation which commences one
 is rarely competent to complete it, he acknowledges that the Press
 prevents our condition from being desperate. ' A light has dawned
 ' on the middling classes only of the men in Europe ; the kings and the
 ' rabble, of equal ignorance, have not yet received its rays.' Cicero's
 Letters, it appears, suggested to him a very different image from the
 poetical one of Brutus, rising effulgent from the godlike stroke, and
 bidding the father of his country hail. ' Steeped in corruption as the
 ' whole nation was, what could even Cicero, Cato, Brutus, have done,
 ' had it been referred to them to establish a good government for their
 ' country ? They had no ideas of government themselves, but of their
 ' degenerate Senate ; nor the people of liberty, but of the factious
 ' opposition of their Tribunes. I confess I can neither see how this
 ' enigma can be solved, nor how farther shown why it has been the
 ' fate of that delightful country never to have known to this day, and
 ' through a course of five and twenty hundred years, the history of
 ' which we possess, one single day of free and rational government.'
 The treatises on government left us by antiquity, are not of a kind to
 have made much impression on the mind of Jefferson ; not even Cicero's
De Republicâ, had it travelled to Monticello. He would find there no
 provision for what he considers the two great objects of a constitution
 — first, that of preventing the ascendancy of an artificial aristocracy,
 grounded on wealth and birth ; next, that of securing in its public
 offices, for the instruction, the trusts, and government of society, a
 pure selection from among nature's most precious gifts, the natural
 aristocracy of talent and of virtue. It will be much easier to protect
 a community from being loaded with misery by kings, priests, and
 nobles,— ' which descriptions of men are an abandoned confederacy
 ' against the happiness of the people,'—than to prescribe a successful
 arrangement for the latter equally important purpose. Jefferson de-
 clares that the scurrility of their Press is alone sufficient to drive the
 best men, whose sensibilities are stronger than their confidence in
 public justice, from aspiring to exalted stations. ' I may say, from
 ' intimate knowledge, that we should have lost the services of the
 ' greatest character of our country, had he been assailed with the

‘ degree of licentiousness now practised. The torture he felt under
 ‘ rare and slight attacks, proved that, under those of which the federal
 ‘ bands have shown themselves capable, he would have thrown up the
 ‘ helm in a burst of indignation.’ The *Republic* of Plato was to Jefferson the heaviest task-work of any reading he ever undertook. He concluded it by congratulating mankind, that ‘ Platonic republicanism
 ‘ had not obtained the same favour as Platonic Christianity :’ since it could have had no other consequence than that we should be now all living, men women and children, pell-mell together, like beasts in the forest.

An exaggerated passion for independence, seems at times to pervert the correctness of Jefferson’s judgment on points connected with our physical and moral constitution, as well as with the principles of society. Not satisfied with telling his young pupil, that a gun, and not a book, ought to be the constant companion of his walks, he proceeds to question the good sense of the Europeans, in valuing themselves upon having subdued the horse to the uses of man. ‘ I doubt whether we
 ‘ have not lost more than we have gained by the use of this animal.
 ‘ No one has occasioned so much the degeneracy of the human body.
 ‘ An Indian goes on foot nearly as far in a day for a long journey, as
 ‘ an enfeebled white does on his horse, and he will tire the best horses.’ Our substitution of positive institutions for individual intelligence and force, collected in a gipsy state, seems to have produced an equally pernicious effect on our characters. ‘ I am convinced that those
 ‘ societies (as the Indians) which live without government, enjoy in
 ‘ their general mass an infinitely greater degree of happiness than those
 ‘ who live under the European governments. Among the former, public
 ‘ opinion is in the place of law, and restrains as powerfully as laws ever
 ‘ did anywhere. Among the latter, under the pretence of governing,
 ‘ they have divided their nation into classes, wolves and sheep.’ In another place, describing to Madison in strong terms the curse of existence under every government except that of America, and, in some slight degree, except under that of England, he goes so far as to declare, that it is a problem not clear in his mind that the condition of the Indians, without any government, is not yet the best of all. This sort of language much more resembles the fanaticism of some fulminator of paradoxes like Rousseau, than the gravity of a statesman, to whose discretion the interests of a civilized community might be safely left.

The commentary on Montesquieu by Destutt Tracy, ‘ unquestion-
 ‘ ably the ablest living writer on abstract subjects,’ appears to be his favourite work on the principles of government. It is called ‘ the
 ‘ most precious gift the present age has received.’ Taylor’s Enquiry, in opposition to Adams’ Defence, represents the theory of the constitution of America, as understood by the dominant party at the present day ; whilst Hume’s History, as republicanized by Baxter, is referred to for the free principles of the English constitution. This latter work seems to have been printed in England, where it is said ‘ not to be
 ‘ popular, because it is republican.’ Popularity or unpopularity can hardly be predicated of a work, of whose existence the most omnigenous readers among our acquaintance have never heard. Brought up in the neighbourhood of indigenous Indians, and living at headquarters during two revolutions, Jefferson had splendid opportunities for the examination and discussion of first principles. After complaining that there is no good work on the organization of society into

civil government, he quotes the well-known condition of the Tribes, and especially the present example of the Cherokees, as conclusive against the patriarchal hypothesis. His expectations in 1789, were apparently turned not merely to the establishment of a national government in France, but to the discovery of new truths in politics. These truths were to be such as would rouse Americans even ‘from the errors in which they had been hitherto rocked;’ but were scarce likely to benefit an Englishman, as they are pronounced to be reasonable beyond his reach, ‘who, slumbering under a kind of half reformation in politics and in religion, is not excited by any thing he feels or sees to question the remains of prejudice!’ We cannot compliment him on what appears to be the only discovery, in the class of new truths, he has thought worth preserving. It is a proof, which, in his horror of the corrupting consequences of a national debt, he volunteers against any possible right in one generation of men to bind another. This doctrine was so great a favourite with its author, that he sent it to Madison all the way from Paris, and at the lapse of a quarter of a century is seen urging it with undiminished earnestness, on the head of the Committee of Finance. Though, like some other natural rights, it has not yet entered into any declaration of them, it is said to be no less a law. Had we a shilling in the American funds, we should feel not over and above easy when the honest and vigorous understanding of the ex-President could be duped by such strange sophistry; especially, since his school is zealous in preaching the necessity of declarations of natural rights, strenuous for re-setting the law of nations upon true principles, and resolved to establish their theories by force, the year they are strong enough to do so.

It has been our object, by a reference to opinions upon general subjects, with which most readers might be supposed to take more or less interest, to give some idea of Jefferson himself. We perceive that we have said nothing of his views on religion, and his sanguine ‘trust that there is not a *young man* now living in the United States, who will not die a Unitarian.’ Our extracts, too, will give a very feeble notion of the fierceness of his thoughts and language concerning a hundred things, as well as persons, on which his blood seems to have never cooled. The rage which breaks out on occasion of the honorary institution of the Cincinnati, and the arbitrary distinctions of Europe, is often like insanity. The Throne of Heaven should be besieged with eternal prayers ‘to extirpate from creation that class of human lions, tigers, and mammoths, called Kings;’ among whom, ‘there is not a crowned head in Europe, whose talents or merits would entitle him to be elected a vestry man, by the people of any parish in America.’ George the Third is ‘maniac George.’ Louis the Sixteenth ‘goes for nothing. He hunts one-half the day, is drunk the other, and signs whatever he is bid.’ It ought to be acknowledged, that in the case of Louis the Sixteenth, as in that of Washington, it requires more ingenuity than we are master of, to reconcile the contradictions which wait upon the writer’s spleen. Within a twelve-month, the King of France ‘is the honestest man in his kingdom, the most regular and economical.’ A clergy is said to live like printers, ‘by the zeal they can kindle and the schisms they can create. The mild and simple principles of the Christian philosophy would produce too much calm, too much regularity of good, to extract from its disciples a support for a numerous priesthood, were they not to

‘sophisticate it, ramify it, split it into hairs, and twist its texts, till they cover the divine morality of its author with mysteries, and require a priesthood to explain them. The Quakers seem to have discovered this. They have no priests, therefore no schisms.’

It is as an American citizen that Jefferson earned and deserves his fame. We have not space to enter, except very briefly, on the honourable detail of his public life. As a Virginian legislator, himself a slave-owner, he there set the example of an effort (unfortunately for his countrymen, an unsuccessful one) for permission to emancipate their slaves. Again, himself a lawyer, aided only by his two friends Wythe and Pendleton, he completed, and reported to the General Assembly, in eighteen months, the extensive improvements both in the principle and the form of their laws, which their new circumstances required. The extravagant compliments with which our own little attempts at consolidation of some chapters in criminal law have been overlaid, and the fatted calf which Sir Robert Peel kills thereupon regularly every session to his own glory, are things which must make our legislative wisdom reasonably suspected among the Americans. They know what they have themselves done in the self-same matter, and can therefore estimate our vaunting and our astonishment at its true value. In a few months, and in this single work, the three colleagues ‘brought so much of the common law as it was thought necessary to alter — all the British statutes from *Magna Charta* to the present day, and all the laws of Virginia, from the establishment of their legislature in 4 Jas. I. to the present time, which they thought should be retained — within the compass of one hundred and twenty-six bills, making a printed folio of ninety pages only.’ Nearly a volume and a half of the present Correspondence, and a considerable portion of his Memoir, relate to the remarkable period from 1785 to 1790, which Jefferson passed as the American minister at Paris. His watchfulness over every subject which might bear on the most favourable arrangement of their new commercial treaties; his perseverance in seeking to negotiate a general alliance against Algiers; the skill and knowledge with which he argued the different questions of national interest that arose during his residence, will not suffer even in comparison with Franklin’s diplomatic talents. Every thing he sees seems to suggest to him the question, Whether it can be made useful in America? Could we compare a twelvemonth’s letters from our Ambassadors’ bags at Paris, Florence, or elsewhere, we should see whether our enormous diplomatic salaries are any thing else than very successful measures for securing our business being ill and idly done. Jefferson’s history, after he returned home, whether as Foreign Secretary to Washington, — as Vice-President under Adams, — or as President, putting the vessel of the state on her Republican tack, is, in other words, the history of America during the several periods.

‘All that should accompany old age’ afterwards followed him in his retirement to Monticello, and dignified his slow-declining years. The din and dangers of American politics must, from time to time, have occasionally disturbed a mind, although less anxious, less patriotic, and less personally pledged, than that of Jefferson. But the great question of Public Education was the only one on which he reserved to himself, as it were the right, as long as he breathed, practically to engage and lead. As early as 1779 he had proposed a systematical plan of general education for Virginia, and accordingly had prepared

three bills, with three distinct grades of instruction. The first consisted of elementary schools, and comprehended all children, rich and poor. The second, colleges for a middle degree of learning, calculated for such purposes of common life as would be desirable to all persons in easy circumstances. The last was a finishing university, for teaching the highest degree of knowledge that a place of mere education can profess to teach. Of these, the elementary bill had alone passed, and that not until 1796. As the expense of the schools was to be borne by a general rate in every county, it appears that the bill had been enforced in none. Jefferson says, in 1822, that if a single boy had received the elements of common education in them, it was in some part of the country not known to him. In respect of a higher scale of education, he complains to Adams that the ‘post-revolutionary youth were born under happier stars’ than they had been; acquiring all learning in their mother’s womb, and treating all knowledge which was not innate, with contempt, or at least neglect. The University of Virginia, mainly established by the energy of this indefatigable octogenarian, will, we trust, save them from ‘the degradation of becoming the Barbary of the Union, and of falling into the ranks of their own negroes.’ The account of its early difficulties is strikingly like those of the London University; only the insubordination to which Jefferson looked with dismay, as to breakers ahead, was the insubordination of students, not professors. Premature ideas of independence, too little repressed by parents, are stated to be the great obstacle of science, and the principal cause of its decay, since the revolution. It is gratifying to see, by a letter written only six months before his death, that, delighted with the professors procured from England, and with the intelligence and industry of the youths assembled for instruction, the spirited old patriot descended into his grave with anticipations of a glorious future, which he could not live to see. ‘The majority of the rulers of our state educated here, will exhibit their country in a degree of sound respectability it has never known, either in our days or those of our forefathers.’ Jefferson, for fifty years, continued uniformly to insist that general instruction was indispensable to the maintenance of their government as a republic. He died in the farther faith, that education at home, that is, that the education of the southern youth in the southern States, is equally necessary, if the States are to remain sovereign and independent. The crack, down to its very centre, which the line of geographical division has run across the Union, may be imagined from the alarm with which he describes the fact, that five hundred of their sons were educating in the northern seminaries, as ‘a canker eating on the vitals of their existence.’ Washington, in his will, recommends the endowment of a university in Virginia, as a protection against the necessity of passing so important a period of life in Europe. Little could he foresee that the fortune of his country would imperatively demand a domestic institution, on the ground of a greater hostility in principle and position, in Connecticut and New York. ‘The reflections that the boys of this age are to be the men of the next; that they should be prepared to receive the holy charge which we are cherishing to deliver over to them; that in establishing an institution of wisdom for them, we secure it to all our future generations; that, in fulfilling this duty, we bring home to our own bosoms the sweet consolation of seeing our sons rising under a luminous tuition to destinies of high promise; these are

‘ considerations which will occur to all ; but all, I fear, do not see the
 ‘ speck in our horizon which is to burst on us, as a tornado, sooner
 ‘ or later.’

Our course of miscellaneous observations may have served to bring before the reader more distinctly the individual character and merits of this distinguished statesman. But space is not remaining for a single sentence on what we stated at the beginning to be the most important part of the present volumes. The historian and politician will here find invaluable materials upon nearly all the controverted points of the domestic and foreign policy of the United States, from the day of their existence as an independent government. The conclusion of our private judgment considerably inclines against some of the propositions maintained by Jefferson: yet, as a party equally honest and well-informed, he will be a necessary witness, whenever we survey the successive constitutional questions which have so furiously divided parties in America. Between the opposite hazards pressing in on either side, the nation has made its choice—a choice certainly of spirit, perhaps of wisdom. For, in case the alternative dependent on a farther consolidation of the powers of the general government be at all correctly assumed throughout this correspondence, it is impossible to say, under any circumstances of intermediate dissension and ultimate separation, that the painful alternative, thus taken and endured, was not yet the best. The foreign policy of the United States is to us a point of more immediate, as, indeed, it some day must become a point of incalculable, importance. It involves bold innovations on the principles and practice of the Law of Nations, as hitherto understood and established. Some of these innovations appear to be improvements for the interest of humanity; others, to be only encroachments and pretexts for the interest of America. In the meantime, it is evident that, as against Europe, and especially as against England, there exists no difference of opinion in their determination to dictate the novelties of their diplomacy at the cannon’s mouth. Jefferson was mistaken in his date; but his declaration is the motto of federalists and republicans alike, and is applied to all matters relating to the continent and the islands of America, as much as to the universal sea. ‘ The day is within
 ‘ my time as well as yours, when we may say by what laws other
 ‘ nations shall treat us on the sea; and we will say it.’ The authority of mere precedent on one side, and this intractableness of insolent passion on the other, can never meet. What a debt would the world owe to those statesmen in both countries, who, whilst her calm and deliberate voice might be yet listened to, would close these fatal questions on the just principles of Reason!

PARALLEL BETWEEN CROMWELL AND NAPOLEON.*

BETWEEN Cromwell and Napoleon, Mr. Hallam has instituted a parallel, scarcely less ingenious than that which Burke has drawn between Richard Cœur de Lion and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden. In this parallel, however, and indeed throughout his work, we think, that he hardly gives Cromwell fair measure. ‘ Cromwell,’ says he, ‘ far unlike

* Hallam’s Constitutional History.—Vol. xlviii. page 142. September, 1828.

‘ his antitype, never showed any signs of a legislative mind, or any
 ‘ desire to place his renown on that noblest basis, the amelioration of
 ‘ social institutions.’ The difference in this respect, we conceive, was
 not in the characters of the men, but in the characters of the revolutions by means of which they rose to power. The civil war in England had been undertaken to defend and restore; the republicans of France set themselves to destroy. In England, the principles of the common law had never been disturbed; and most even of its forms had been held sacred. In France, the law and its ministers had been swept away together. In France, therefore, legislation necessarily became the first business of the first settled government which rose on the ruins of the old system. The admirers of Inigo Jones have always maintained that his works are inferior to those of Sir Christopher Wren, only because the great fire of London gave to the latter such a field for the display of his powers, as no architect in the history of the world ever possessed. Similar allowance must be made for Cromwell. If he erected little that was new, it was because there had been no general devastation to clear a space for him. As it was, he reformed the representative system in a most judicious manner. He rendered the administration of justice uniform throughout the island. We will quote a passage from his speech to the Parliament in September 1656, which contains, we think, stronger indications of a legislative mind, than are to be found in the whole range of orations delivered on such occasions before or since.

‘ There is one general grievance in the nation. It is the law
 ‘ I think, I may say it, I have as eminent judges in this land as have
 ‘ been had, or that the nation has had for these many years. Truly, I
 ‘ could be particular as to the executive part, to the administration;
 ‘ but that would trouble you. But the truth of it is, there are wicked
 ‘ and abominable laws that will be in your power to alter. To hang a
 ‘ man for sixpence, threepence, I know not what,—to hang for a trifle,
 ‘ and pardon murder, is in the ministration of the law, through the ill
 ‘ framing of it. I have known in my experience abominable murders
 ‘ quitted; and to see men lose their lives for petty matters! This is a
 ‘ thing that God will reckon for; and I wish it may not lie upon this
 ‘ nation a day longer than you have an opportunity to give a remedy;
 ‘ and I hope I shall cheerfully join with you in it.’

Mr. Hallam truly says, that though it is impossible to rank Cromwell with Napoleon as a general, yet ‘ his exploits were as much above the
 ‘ level of his contemporaries, and more the effects of an original
 ‘ uneducated capacity.’ Bonaparte was trained in the best military schools; the army which he led to Italy was one of the finest that ever existed. Cromwell passed his youth and the prime of his manhood in a civil situation. He never looked on war till he was more than forty years old. He had first to form himself, and then to form his troops. Out of raw levies he created an army, the bravest and the best disciplined, the most orderly in peace, and the most terrible in war, that Europe had seen. He called this body into existence. He led it to conquest. He never fought a battle without gaining a victory. He never gained a victory without annihilating the force opposed to him. Yet his triumphs were not the highest glory of his military system. The respect which his troops paid to property, their attachment to the laws and religion of their country, their submission to the civil power, their temperance, their intelligence, their industry, are without parallel.

It was after the Restoration that the spirit which their great leader had infused into them was most signally displayed. At the command of the established government, a government which had no means of enforcing obedience, fifty thousand soldiers, whose backs no enemy had ever seen, either in domestic or in continental war, laid down their arms, and retired into the mass of the people—thenceforward to be distinguished only by superior diligence, sobriety, and regularity in the pursuits of peace, from the other members of the community which they had saved.

In the general spirit and character of his administration, we think Cromwell far superior to Napoleon. ‘In civil government,’ says Mr. Hallam, ‘there can be no adequate parallel between one who had ‘sucked only the dregs of a besotted fanaticism, and one to whom the ‘stores of reason and philosophy were open.’ These expressions, it seems to us, convey the highest eulogium on our great countryman. Reason and philosophy did not teach the conqueror of Europe to command his passions, or to pursue, as a first object, the happiness of his people. They did not prevent him from risking his fame and his power in a frantic contest against the principles of human nature and the laws of the physical world, against the rage of the winter and the liberty of the sea. They did not exempt him from the influence of that most pernicious of superstitions, a presumptuous fatalism. They did not preserve him from the inebriation of prosperity, or restrain him from indecent querulousness and violence in adversity. On the other hand, the fanaticism of Cromwell never urged him on impracticable undertakings, or confused his perception of the public good. Inferior to Bonaparte in invention, he was far superior to him in wisdom. The French Emperor is among conquerors what Voltaire is among writers, a miraculous child. His splendid genius was frequently clouded by fits of humour as absurdly perverse as those of the pet of the nursery, who quarrels with his food, and dashes his play-things to pieces. Cromwell was emphatically a man. He possessed, in an eminent degree, that masculine and full-grown robustness of mind, that equally diffused intellectual health, which, if our national partiality does not mislead us, has peculiarly characterised the great men of England. Never was any ruler so conspicuously born for sovereignty. The cup which has intoxicated almost all others, sobered him. His spirit, restless from its buoyancy in a lower sphere, reposed in majestic placidity as soon as it had reached the level congenial to it. He had nothing in common with that large class of men who distinguish themselves in lower posts, and whose incapacity becomes obvious as soon as the public voice summons them to take the lead. Rapidly as his fortunes grew, his mind expanded more rapidly still. Insignificant as a private citizen, he was a great general; he was a still greater prince. The manner of Napoleon was a theatrical compound, in which the coarseness of a revolutionary guard-room was blended with the ceremony of the old Court of Versailles. Cromwell, by the confession even of his enemies, exhibited in his demeanour the simple and natural nobleness of a man neither ashamed of his origin, nor vain of his elevation; of a man who had found his proper place in society, and who felt secure that he was competent to fill it. Easy, even to familiarity, where his own dignity was concerned; he was punctilious only for his country. His own character he left to take care of itself; he left it to be defended by his victories in war, and his reforms in peace. But he was a jealous

and implacable guardian of the public honour. He suffered a crazy Quaker to insult him in the midst of Whitehall, and revenged himself only by liberating him and giving him a dinner. But he was prepared to risk the chances of war to avenge the blood of a private Englishman.

No sovereign ever carried to the throne so large a portion of the best qualities of the middling orders — so strong a sympathy with the feelings and interests of his people. He was sometimes driven to arbitrary measures ; but he had a high, stout, honest, English heart. Hence it was that he loved to surround his throne with such men as Hale and Blake. Hence it was that he allowed so large a share of political liberty to his subjects, and that, even when an opposition dangerous to his power and to his person, almost compelled him to govern by the sword, he was still anxious to leave a germ from which, at a more favourable season, free institutions might spring. We firmly believe, that if his first Parliament had not commenced its debates by disputing his title, his government would have been as mild at home as it was energetic and able abroad. He was a soldier ; — he had risen by war. Had his ambition been of an impure or selfish kind, it would have been easy for him to plunge his country into continental hostilities on a large scale, and to dazzle the restless factions which he ruled, by the splendour of his victories. Some of his enemies have sneeringly remarked, that in the successes obtained under his administration, he had no personal share ; as if a man who had raised himself from obscurity to empire solely by his military talents, could have any unworthy reason for shrinking from military enterprise. This reproach is his highest glory. In the success of the English navy he could have no selfish interest. Its triumphs added nothing to his fame ; its increase added nothing to his means of overawing his enemies ; its great leader was not his friend. Yet he took a peculiar pleasure in encouraging that noble service, which, of all the instruments employed by an English government, is the most impotent for mischief, and the most powerful for good. His administration was glorious, but with no vulgar glory. It was not one of those periods of overstrained and convulsive exertion which necessarily produce debility and languor. Its energy was natural, healthful, temperate. He placed England at the head of the Protestant interest, and in the first rank of Christian powers. He taught every nation to value her friendship and to dread her enmity. But he did not squander her resources in a vain attempt to invest her with that supremacy which no power, in the modern system of Europe, can safely affect, or can long retain.

This noble and sober wisdom had its reward. If he did not carry the banners of the Commonwealth in triumph to distant capitals ; if he did not adorn Whitehall with the spoils of the Stadthouse and the Louvre ; if he did not portion out Flanders and Germany into principalities for his kinsmen and his generals ; he did not, on the other hand, see his country over-run by the armies of nations which his ambition had provoked. He did not drag out the last years of his life an exile and a prisoner, in an unhealthy climate and under an ungenerous gaoler ; raging with the impotent desire of vengeance, and brooding over visions of departed glory. He went down to his grave in the fulness of power and fame ; and left to his son an authority which any man of ordinary firmness and prudence would have retained.

But for the weakness of that foolish Ishbosheth, the opinions which we have been expressing would, we believe, now have formed the

orthodox creed of good Englishmen. We might now be writing under the government of his Highness Oliver the Fifth, or Richard the Fourth, Protector, by the grace of God, of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the dominions thereto belonging. The form of the great founder of the dynasty, on horseback, as when he led the charge at Naseby, or on foot, as when he took the mace from the table of the Commons, would adorn all our squares, and overlook our public offices from Charing-Cross; and sermons in his praise would be duly preached on his lucky day, the third of September, by court chaplains, guiltless of the abominations of the surplice.

But, though his memory has not been taken under the patronage of any party, though every device has been used to blacken it, though to praise him would long have been a punishable crime, yet truth and merit at last prevail. Cowards, who had trembled at the very sound of his name, tools of office who, like Downing, had been proud of the honour of lacqueying his coach, might insult him in loyal speeches and addresses. Venal poets might transfer to the King the same eulogies, little the worse for wear, which they had bestowed on the Protector. A fickle multitude might crowd to shout and scoff round the gibbeted remains of the greatest Prince and Soldier of the age. But when the Dutch cannon startled an effeminate tyrant in his own palace, when the conquests which had been made by the armies of Cromwell were sold to pamper the harlots of Charles, when Englishmen were sent to fight, under the banners of France, against the independence of Europe and the Protestant religion, many honest hearts swelled in secret at the thought of one who had never suffered his country to be ill-used by any but himself. It must indeed have been difficult for any Englishman to see the salaried Viceroy of France, at the most important crisis of his fate, sauntering through his haram, yawning and talking nonsense over a despatch, or beslobbering his brother and his courtiers in a fit of maudlin affection*, without a respectful and tender remembrance of Him, before whose genius the young pride of Lewis, and the veteran craft of Mazarine, had stood rebuked; who had humbled Spain on the land, and Holland on the sea; and whose imperial voice had arrested the victorious arms of Sweden, and the persecuting fires of Rome. Even to the present day his character, though constantly attacked, and scarcely ever defended, is popular with the great body of our countrymen.

SURVEY OF THE GREEK, THE ROMAN, AND THE MODERN HISTORIANS.†

HERODOTUS — THUCYDIDES — XENOPHON — POLYBIUS — ARRIAN — LIVY
— SALLUST — TACITUS — HUME — MITFORD — LINGARD — SOUTHEY
AND BRODIE.

To write History respectably—that is, to abbreviate dispatches, and make extracts from speeches, to intersperse in due proportion epithets of praise and abhorrence, to draw up antithetical characters of great

* These particulars, and many more of the same kind, are recorded by Pepys.

† Neele's Romance of History. London, 1828. — Vol. xlvii. page 331. May, 1828.

men, setting forth how many contradictory virtues and vices they united, and abounding in *withs* and *withouts*; all this is very easy. But to be a really great historian is perhaps the rarest of intellectual distinctions. Many Scientific works are, in their kind, absolutely perfect. There are Poems which we should be inclined to designate as faultless, or as disfigured only by blemishes which pass unnoticed in the general blaze of excellence. There are Speeches, some speeches of Demosthenes particularly, in which it would be impossible to alter a word without altering it for the worse. But we are acquainted with no History which approaches to our notion of what a history ought to be — with no history which does not widely depart, either on the right hand or on the left, from the exact line.

The cause may easily be assigned. This province of literature is a debateable land. It lies on the confines of two distinct territories. It is under the jurisdiction of two hostile powers; and, like other districts similarly situated, it is ill defined, ill cultivated, and ill regulated. Instead of being equally shared between its two rulers, the Reason and the Imagination, it falls alternately under the sole and absolute dominion of each. It is sometimes fiction. It is sometimes theory.

History, it has been said, is philosophy teaching by examples. Unhappily what the philosophy gains in soundness and depth, the examples generally lose in vividness. A perfect historian must possess an imagination sufficiently powerful to make his narrative affecting and picturesque. Yet he must control it so absolutely as to content himself with the materials which he finds, and to refrain from supplying deficiencies by additions of his own. He must be a profound and ingenious reasoner. Yet he must possess sufficient self-command to abstain from casting his facts in the mould of his hypothesis. Those who can justly estimate these almost insuperable difficulties will not think it strange that every writer should have failed, either in the narrative or in the speculative department of history.

It may be laid down as a general rule, though subject to considerable qualifications and exceptions, that history begins in Novel and ends in Essay. Of the romantic historians Herodotus is the earliest and the best. His animation, his simple-hearted tenderness, his wonderful talent for description and dialogue, and the pure sweet flow of his language, place him at the head of narrators. He reminds us of a delightful child. There is a grace beyond the reach of affectation in his awkwardness, a malice in his innocence, an intelligence in his nonsense, an insinuating eloquence in his lisp. We know of no writer who makes such interest for himself and his book in the heart of the reader. At the distance of three-and-twenty centuries, we feel for him the same sort of pitying fondness which Fontaine and Gay are said to have inspired in society. He has written an incomparable book. He has written something better perhaps than the best history; but he has not written a good history; he is, from the first to the last chapter, an inventor. We do not here refer merely to those gross fictions with which he has been reproached by the critics of later times. We speak of that colouring which is equally diffused over his whole narrative, and which perpetually leaves the most sagacious reader in doubt what to reject and what to receive. The most authentic parts of his work bear the same relation to his wildest legends, which Henry the Fifth bears to the *Tempest*. There was an expedition undertaken by Xerxes against Greece; and there was an invasion of France. There was a

battle at Plataea; and there was a battle at Agincourt. Cambridge and Exeter, the Constable and the Dauphin, were persons as real as Demaratus and Pausanias. The harangue of the Archbishop on the Salic Law and the Book of Numbers differs much less from the orations which have in all ages proceeded from the Right Reverend bench, than the speeches of Mardonius and Artabanus, from those which were delivered at the Council-board of Susa. Shakspeare gives us enumerations of armies, and returns of killed and wounded, which are not, we suspect, much less accurate than those of Herodotus. There are passages in Herodotus nearly as long as acts of Shakspeare, in which everything is told dramatically, and in which the narrative serves only the purpose of stage-directions. It is possible, no doubt, that the substance of some real conversations may have been reported to the historian. But events which, if they ever happened, happened in ages and nations so remote that the particulars could never have been known to him, are related with the greatest minuteness of detail. We have all that Candaules said to Gyges, and all that passed between Astyages and Harpagus. We are therefore unable to judge whether, in the account which he gives of transactions respecting which he might possibly have been well informed, we can trust to anything beyond the naked outline; whether, for example, the answer of Gelon to the ambassadors of the Grecian confederacy, or the expressions which passed between Aristides and Themistocles at their famous interview, have been correctly transmitted to us. The great events are, no doubt, faithfully related. So, probably, are many of the slighter circumstances; but which of them it is impossible to ascertain. The fictions are so much like the facts, and the facts so much like the fictions, that, with respect to many most interesting particulars, our belief is neither given nor withheld, but remains in an uneasy and interminable state of abeyance. We know that there is truth, but we cannot exactly decide where it lies.

The faults of Herodotus are the faults of a simple and imaginative mind. Children and servants are remarkably Herodotean in their style of narration. They tell every thing dramatically. Their *says hes* and *says shes* are proverbial. Every person who has had to settle their disputes knows that, even when they have no intention to deceive, their reports of conversation always require to be carefully sifted. If an educated man were giving an account of the late change of administration, he would say — ‘ Lord Goderich resigned; and the King, in consequence, sent for the Duke of Wellington.’ A porter tells the story as if he had been hid behind the curtains of the royal bed at Windsor: ‘ So Lord Goderich says, “ I cannot manage this business; “ I must go out.” So the King says, — says he, “ Well, then, I “ must send for the Duke of Wellington — that’s all.” ’ This is in the very manner of the father of history.

Herodotus wrote as it was natural that he should write. He wrote for a nation susceptible, curious, lively, insatiably desirous of novelty and excitement; for a nation in which the fine arts had attained their highest excellence, but in which philosophy was still in its infancy. His countrymen had but recently begun to cultivate prose composition. Public transactions had generally been recorded in verse. The first historians might, therefore, indulge, without fear of censure, in the license allowed to their predecessors the bards. Books were few. The events of former times were learned from tradition and from popular ballads; the manners of foreign countries from the reports of

travellers. It is well known that the mystery which overhangs what is distant, either in space or time, frequently prevents us from censuring as unnatural what we perceive to be impossible. We stare at a dragoon, who has killed three French cuirassiers, as a prodigy; yet we read, without the least disgust, how Godfrey slew his thousands, and Rinaldo his ten thousands. Within the last hundred years, stories about China and Bantam, which ought not to have imposed on an old nurse, were gravely laid down as foundations of political theories by eminent philosophers. What the time of the Crusades is to us, the generation of Cræsus and Solon was to the Greeks of the time of Herodotus. Babylon was to them what Pekin was to the French academicians of the last century.

For such a people was the book of Herodotus composed; and, if we may trust to a report, not sanctioned indeed by writers of high authority, but in itself not improbable, it was composed not to be read, but to be heard. It was not to the slow circulation of a few copies, which the rich only could possess, that the aspiring author looked for his reward. The great Olympian festival,—the solemnity which collected multitudes, proud of the Grecian name, from the wildest mountains of Doris, and the remotest colonies of Italy and Libya,—was to witness his triumph. The interest of the narrative, and the beauty of the style, were aided by the imposing effect of recitation,—by the splendour of the spectacle,—by the powerful influence of sympathy. A critic, who could have asked for authorities in the midst of such a scene, must have been of a cold and sceptical nature; and few such critics were there. As was the historian, such were the auditors,—inquisitive, credulous, easily moved by religious awe or patriotic enthusiasm. They were the very men to hear with delight of strange beasts, and birds, and trees,—of dwarfs, and giants, and cannibals—of gods, whose very names it was impiety to utter,—of ancient dynasties, which had left behind them monuments surpassing all the works of later times,—of towns like provinces,—of rivers like seas,—of stupendous walls, and temples, and pyramids,—of the rites which the Magi performed at day-break on the tops of the mountains,—of the secrets inscribed on the eternal obelisks of Memphis. With equal delight they would have listened to the graceful romances of their own country. They now heard of the exact accomplishment of obscure predictions, of the punishment of crimes over which the justice of heaven had seemed to slumber,—of dreams, omens, warnings from the dead,—of princesses, for whom noble suitors contended in every generous exercise of strength and skill,—of infants, strangely preserved from the dagger of the assassin, to fulfil high destinies.

As the narrative approached their own times, the interest became still more absorbing. The chronicler had now to tell the story of that great conflict, from which Europe dates its intellectual and political supremacy,—a story which, even at this distance of time, is the most marvellous and the most touching in the annals of the human race,—a story abounding with all that is wild and wonderful, with all that is pathetic and animating; with the gigantic caprices of infinite wealth and despotic power,—with the mightier miracles of wisdom, of virtue, and of courage. He told them of rivers dried up in a day,—of provinces famished for a meal,—of a passage for ships hewn through the mountains,—of a road for armies spread upon the waves,—of monarchies and commonwealths swept away,—of anxiety, of terror, of con-

fusion, of despair!— and then of proud and stubborn hearts tried in that extremity of evil, and not found wanting,— of resistance long maintained against desperate odds,— of lives dearly sold, when resistance could be maintained no more,— of signal deliverance, and of unsparing revenge. Whatever gave a stronger air of reality to a narrative so well calculated to inflame the passions, and to flatter national pride, was certain to be favourably received.

Between the time at which Herodotus is said to have composed his history, and the close of the Peloponnesian war, about forty years elapsed,— forty years, crowded with great military and political events. The circumstances of that period produced a great effect on the Grecian character; and nowhere was this effect so remarkable as in the illustrious democracy of Athens. An Athenian, indeed, even in the time of Herodotus, would scarcely have written a book so romantic and garrulous as that of Herodotus. As civilization advanced, the citizens of that famous republic became still less visionary, and still less simple-hearted. They aspired to know, where their ancestors had been content to doubt; they began to doubt, where their ancestors had thought it their duty to believe. Aristophanes is fond of alluding to this change in the temper of his countrymen. The father and son, in the *Clouds*, are evidently representatives of the generations to which they respectively belonged. Nothing more clearly illustrates the nature of this moral revolution, than the change which passed upon tragedy. The wild sublimity of Æschylus became the scoff of every young Phidippides. Lectures on abstruse points of philosophy, the fine distinctions of casuistry, and the dazzling fence of rhetoric, were substituted for poetry. The language lost something of that infantine sweetness which had characterised it. It became less like the ancient Tuscan, and more like the modern French.

The fashionable logic of the Greeks was, indeed, far from strict. Logic never can be strict where books are scarce, and where information is conveyed orally. We are all aware how frequently fallacies, which, when set down on paper, are at once detected, pass for unanswerable arguments when dexterously and volubly urged in Parliament, at the bar, or in private conversation. The reason is evident. We cannot inspect them closely enough to perceive their inaccuracy. We cannot readily compare them with each other. We lose sight of one part of the subject, before another, which ought to be received in connexion with it, comes before us; and as there is no immutable record of what has been admitted, and of what has been denied, direct contradictions pass muster with little difficulty. Almost all the education of a Greek consisted in talking and listening. His opinions on government were picked up in the debates of the assembly. If he wished to study metaphysics, instead of shutting himself up with a book, he walked down to the market-place to look for a sophist. So completely were men formed to these habits, that even writing acquired a conversational air. The philosophers adopted the form of dialogue, as the most natural mode of communicating knowledge. Their reasonings have the merits and the defects which belong to that species of composition; and are characterised rather by quickness and subtilty, than by depth and precision. Truth is exhibited in parts, and by glimpses. Innumerable clever hints are given; but no sound and durable system is erected. The *argumentum ad hominem*, a kind of argument most efficacious in debate, but utterly useless for the in-

vestigation of general principles, is among their favourite resources. Hence, though nothing can be more admirable than the skill which Socrates displays in the conversations which Plato has reported or invented, his victories, for the most part, seem to us unprofitable. A trophy is set up; but no new province is added to the dominions of the human mind.

Still, where thousands of keen and ready intellects were constantly employed in speculating on the qualities of actions, and on the principles of government, it was impossible that history should retain its old character. It became less gossiping and less picturesque; but much more accurate, and somewhat more scientific.

The history of Thucydides differs from that of Herodotus as a portrait differs from the representation of an imaginary scene; as the Burke or Fox of Reynolds differs from his Ugolino or his Beaufort. In the former case, the archetype is given: in the latter, it is created. The faculties which are required for the latter purpose are of a higher and rarer order than those which suffice for the former, and indeed necessarily comprise them. He who is able to paint what he sees with the eye of the mind, will surely be able to paint what he sees with the eye of the body. He who can invent a story, and tell it well, will also be able to tell, in an interesting manner, a story which he has not invented. If, in practice, some of the best writers of fiction have been among the worst writers of history, it has been because one of their talents had merged in another so completely, that it could not be severed; because, having long been habituated to invent and narrate at the same time, they found it impossible to narrate without inventing.

Some capricious and discontented artists have affected to consider portrait-painting as unworthy of a man of genius. Some critics have spoken in the same contemptuous manner of history. Johnson puts the case thus: The historian tells either what is false or what is true. In the former case he is no historian. In the latter, he has no opportunity for displaying his abilities. For truth is one; and all who tell the truth must tell it alike.

It is not difficult to elude both the horns of this dilemma. We will recur to the analogous art of portrait-painting. Any man with eyes and hands may be taught to take a likeness. The process, up to a certain point, is merely mechanical. If this were all, a man of talents might justly despise the occupation. But we could mention portraits which are resemblances,—but not mere resemblances; faithful,—but much more than faithful; portraits which condense into one point of time, and exhibit, at a single glance, the whole history of turbid and eventful lives—in which the eye seems to scrutinize us, and the mouth to command us—in which the brow menaces, and the lip almost quivers with scorn—in which every wrinkle is a comment on some important transaction. The account which Thucydides has given of the retreat from Syracuse is, among narratives, what Vandyk's Lord Strafford is among paintings.

Diversity, it is said, implies error; truth is one, and admits of no degrees. We answer, that this principle holds good only in abstract reasonings. When we talk of the truth of imitation in the fine arts, we mean an imperfect and a graduated truth. No picture is exactly like the original; nor is a picture good in proportion as it is like the original. When Sir Thomas Lawrence paints a handsome peeress, he does not contemplate her through a powerful microscope, and transfer to the

canvass the pores of the skin, the blood-vessels of the eye, and all the other beauties which Gulliver discovered in the Brobdignaggian maids of honour. If he were to do this, the effect would not merely be unpleasant, but unless the scale of the picture were proportionably enlarged, would be absolutely *false*. And, after all, a microscope of greater power than that which he had employed, would convict him of innumerable omissions. The same may be said of history. Perfectly and absolutely true it cannot be: for to be perfectly and absolutely true, it ought to record *all* the slightest particulars of the slightest transactions — all the things done, and all the words uttered, during the time of which it treats. The omission of any circumstance, however insignificant, would be a defect. If history were written thus, the Bodleian library would not contain the occurrences of a week. What is told in the fullest and most accurate annals bears an infinitely small proportion to what is suppressed. The difference between the copious work of Clarendon, and the account of the civil wars in the abridgement of Goldsmith, vanishes, when compared with the immense mass of facts, respecting which both are equally silent.

No picture, then, and no history, can present us with the whole truth: but those are the best pictures and the best histories which exhibit such parts of the truth as most nearly produce the effect of the whole. He who is deficient in the art of selection may, by showing nothing but the truth, produce all the effect of the grossest falsehood. It perpetually happens that one writer tells less truth than another, merely because he tells more truths. In the imitative arts we constantly see this. There are lines in the human face, and objects in landscape, which stand in such relations to each other, that they ought either to be all introduced into a painting together, or all omitted together. A sketch into which none of them enters, may be excellent; but if some are given and others left out, though there are more points of likeness, there is less likeness. An outline scrawled with a pen, which seizes the marked features of a countenance, will give a much stronger idea of it than a bad painting in oils. Yet the worst painting in oils that ever hung at Somerset House resembles the original in many more particulars. A bust of white marble may give an excellent idea of a blooming face. Colour the lips and cheeks of the bust, leaving the hair and eyes unaltered, and the similarity, instead of being more striking, will be less so.

History has its foreground and its background: and it is principally in the management of its perspective, that one artist differs from another. Some events must be represented on a large scale, others diminished; the great majority will be lost in the dimness of the horizon; and a general idea of their joint effect will be given by a few slight touches.

In this respect, no writer has ever equalled Thucydides. He was a perfect master of the art of gradual diminution. His history is sometimes as concise as a chronological chart; yet it is always perspicuous. It is sometimes as minute as one of Lovelace's letters; yet it is never prolix. He never fails to contract and to expand it in the right place.

Thucydides borrowed from Herodotus the practice of putting speeches of his own into the mouths of his characters. In Herodotus this usage is scarcely censurable. It is of a piece with his whole manner. But it is altogether incongruous in the work of his successor, and violates, not only the accuracy of history, but the decencies of fiction. When once we enter into the spirit of Herodotus, we

find no inconsistency. The conventional probability of his drama is preserved from the beginning to the end. The deliberate orations, and the familiar dialogues, are in strict keeping with each other. But the speeches of Thucydides are neither preceded nor followed by anything with which they harmonize. They give to the whole book something of the grotesque character of those Chinese pleasure-grounds, in which perpendicular rocks of granite start up in the midst of a soft green plain. Invention is shocking, where truth is in such close juxta-position with it.

Thucydides honestly tells us that some of these discourses are purely fictitious. He may have reported the substance of others correctly. But it is clear from the internal evidence that he has preserved no more than the substance. His own peculiar habits of thought and expression are everywhere discernible. Individual and national peculiarities are seldom to be traced in the sentiments, and never in the diction. The oratory of the Corinthians and Thebans is not less attic, either in matter or in manner, than that of the Athenians. The style of Cleon is as pure, as austere, as terse, and as significant, as that of Pericles.

In spite of this great fault, it must be allowed that Thucydides has surpassed all his rivals in the art of historical narration, in the art of producing an effect on the imagination, by skilful selection and disposition, without indulging in the license of invention. But narration, though an important part of the business of a historian, is not the whole. To append a moral to a work of fiction, is either useless or superfluous. A fiction may give a more impressive effect to what is already known, but it can teach nothing new. If it presents to us characters and trains of events to which our experience furnishes us with nothing similar, instead of deriving instruction from it, we pronounce it unnatural. We do not form our opinions from it; but we try it by our preconceived opinions. Fiction, therefore, is essentially imitative. Its merit consists in its resemblance to a model with which we are already familiar, or to which at least we can instantly refer. Hence it is that the anecdotes which interest us most strongly in authentic narrative, are offensive when introduced into novels; that what is called the romantic part of history, is in fact the least romantic. It is delightful as history, because it contradicts our previous notions of human nature, and of the connexion of causes and effects. It is, on that very account, shocking and incongruous in fiction. In fiction, the principles are given to find the facts: in history, the facts are given to find the principles; and the writer who does not explain the phenomena as well as state them, performs only one half of his office. Facts are the mere dross of history. It is from the abstract truth which interpenetrates them, and lies latent among them, like gold in the ore, that the mass derives its whole value: and the precious particles are generally combined with the baser in such a manner that the separation is a task of the utmost difficulty.

Here Thucydides is deficient: the deficiency, indeed, is not discreditable to him. It was the inevitable effect of circumstances. It was in the nature of things necessary that, in some part of its progress through political science, the human mind should reach that point which it attained in his time. Knowledge advances by steps, and not by leaps. The axioms of an English debating club would have been startling and mysterious paradoxes to the most enlightened statesman

of Athens. But it would be as absurd to speak contemptuously of the Athenian on this account, as to ridicule Strabo for not having given us an account of Chili, or to talk of Ptolemy as we talk of Sir Richard Phillips. Still, when we wish for solid geographical information, we must prefer the solemn coxcombry of Pinkerton to the noble work of Strabo. If we wanted instruction respecting the solar system, we should consult the silliest girl from a boarding-school, rather than Ptolemy.

Thucydides was undoubtedly a sagacious and reflecting man. This clearly appears from the ability with which he discusses practical questions. But the talent of deciding on the circumstances of a particular case is often possessed in the highest perfection by persons destitute of the power of generalization. Men skilled in the military tactics of civilized nations have been amazed at the far sightedness and penetration which a Mohawk displays in concerting his stratagems, or in discerning those of his enemies. In England, no class possesses so much of that peculiar ability which is required for constructing ingenious schemes, and for obviating remote difficulties, as the thieves and the thief-takers. Women have more of this dexterity than men. Lawyers have more of it than statesmen: statesmen have more of it than philosophers. Monk had more of it than Harrington and all his club. Walpole had more of it than Adam Smith or Beccaria. Indeed, the species of discipline by which this dexterity is acquired, tends to contract the mind, and to render it incapable of abstract reasoning.

The Grecian statesmen of the age of Thucydides were distinguished by their practical sagacity, their insight into motives, their skill in devising means for the attainment of their ends. A state of society in which the rich were constantly planning the oppression of the poor, and the poor the spoliation of the rich, in which the ties of party had superseded those of country, in which revolutions and counter-revolutions were events of daily occurrence, was naturally prolific in desperate and crafty political adventurers. This was the very school in which men were likely to acquire the dissimulation of Mazarine, the judicious temerity of Richelieu, the penetration, the exquisite tact, the almost instinctive presentiment of approaching events which gave so much authority to the counsel of Shaftesbury, that 'it was as if a man had inquired of the oracle of God.' In this school Thucydides studied; and his wisdom is that which such a school would naturally afford. He judges better of circumstances than of principles. The more a question is narrowed, the better he reasons upon it. His work suggests many most important considerations respecting the first principles of government and morals, the growth of factions, the organization of armies, and the mutual relations of communities. Yet all his general observations on these subjects are very superficial. His most judicious remarks differ from the remarks of a really philosophical historian, as a sum correctly cast up by a book-keeper, from a general expression discovered by an algebraist. The former is useful only in a single transaction; the latter may be applied to an infinite number of cases.

This opinion will, we fear, be considered as heterodox. For, not to speak of the illusion which the sight of a Greek type, or the sound of a Greek diphthong, often produces, there are some peculiarities in the manner of Thucydides, which in no small degree have tended to secure to him the reputation of profundity. His book is evidently the book

of a man and a statesman ; and in this respect presents a remarkable contrast to the delightful childishness of Herodotus. Throughout it there is an air of matured power, of grave and melancholy reflection, of impartiality, and habitual self-command. His feelings are rarely indulged, and speedily repressed. Vulgar prejudices of every kind, and particularly vulgar superstitions, he treats with a cold and sober disdain peculiar to himself. His style is weighty, condensed, antithetical, and not unfrequently obscure. But when we look at his political philosophy, without regard to these circumstances, we find him to have been, what indeed it would have been a miracle if he had not been, simply an Athenian of the fifth century before Christ.

Xenophon is commonly placed, but we think without much reason, in the same rank with Herodotus and Thucydides. He resembles them, indeed, in the purity and sweetness of his style ; but in spirit, he rather resembles that later school of historians, whose works seem to be fables, composed for a moral, and who, in their eagerness to give us warnings and example, forget to give us men and women. The *Life of Cyrus*, whether we look upon it as a history or as a romance, seems to us a very wretched performance. The *Expedition of the Ten Thousand*, and the *History of Grecian Affairs*, are certainly pleasant reading ; but they indicate no great power of mind. In truth, Xenophon, though his taste was elegant, his disposition amiable, and his intercourse with the world extensive, had, we suspect, rather a weak head. Such was evidently the opinion of that extraordinary man to whom he early attached himself, and for whose memory he entertained an idolatrous veneration. He came in only for the milk with which Socrates nourished his babes in philosophy. A few saws of morality, and a few of the simplest doctrines of natural religion, were enough for the good young man. The strong meat, the bold speculations on physical and metaphysical science, were reserved for auditors of a different description. Even the lawless habits of a captain of mercenary troops could not change the tendency which the character of Xenophon early acquired. To the last, he seems to have retained a sort of heathen Puritanism. The sentiments of piety and virtue which abound in his works, are those of a well-meaning man, somewhat timid and narrow-minded, devout from constitution rather than from rational conviction. He was as superstitious as Herodotus, but in a way far more offensive. The very peculiarities which charm us in an infant, the toothless mumbling, the stammering, the tottering, the helplessness, the causeless tears and laughter, are disgusting in old age. In the same manner, the absurdity which precedes a period of general intelligence is often pleasing ; that which follows it is contemptible. The nonsense of Herodotus is that of a baby. The nonsense of Xenophon is that of a dotard. His stories about dreams, omens, and prophecies, present a strange contrast to the passages in which the shrewd and incredulous Thucydides mentions the popular superstitions. It is not quite clear that Xenophon was honest in his credulity ; his fanaticism was in some degree politic. He would have made an excellent member of the Apostolic Comarilla. An Alarmist by nature, an Aristocrat by party, he carried to an unreasonable excess his horror of popular turbulence. The quiet atrocity of Sparta did not shock him in the same manner ; for he hated tumult more than crimes. He was desirous to find restraints which might curb the passions of the multitude ; and he absurdly fancied that he had found them in a religion without evidences or sanction, precepts

or example, in a frigid system of Theophilanthropy, supported by nursery tales.

Polybius and Arrian have given us authentic accounts of facts, and here their merit ends. They were not men of comprehensive minds ; they had not the art of telling a story in an interesting manner. They have in consequence been thrown into the shade by writers, who, though less studious of truth than themselves, understood far better the art of producing effect, by Livy and Quintus Curtius.

Yet Polybius and Arrian deserve high praise, when compared with the writers of that school of which Plutarch may be considered as the head. For the historians of this class we must confess that we entertain a peculiar aversion. They seem to have been pedants, who, though destitute of those valuable qualities which are frequently found in conjunction with pedantry, thought themselves great philosophers and great politicians. They not only mislead their readers in every page, as to particular facts, but they appear to have altogether misconceived the whole character of the times of which they write. They were inhabitants of an empire bounded by the Atlantic Ocean and the Euphrates, by the ice of Scythia and the sands of Mauritania ; composed of nations whose manners, whose languages, whose religion, whose countenances and complexions, were widely different, governed by one mighty despotism, which had risen on the ruins of a thousand commonwealths and kingdoms. Of liberty, such as it is in small democracies ; of patriotism, such as it is in small independent communities of any kind, they had, and they could have, no experimental knowledge. But they had read of men who exerted themselves in the cause of their country, with an energy unknown in later times, who had violated the dearest of domestic charities, or voluntarily devoted themselves to death for the public good ; and they wondered at the degeneracy of their contemporaries. It never occurred to them, that the feelings which they so greatly admired sprung from local and occasional causes ; that they will always grow up spontaneously in small societies ; and that, in large empires, though they may be forced into existence for a short time by peculiar circumstances, they cannot be general or permanent. It is impossible that any man should feel for a fortress on a remote frontier, as he feels for his own house ; that he should grieve for a defeat in which ten thousand people whom he never saw have fallen, as he grieves for a defeat which has half unpeopled the street in which he lives ; that he should leave his home for a military expedition, in order to preserve the balance of power, as cheerfully as he would leave it to repel invaders who had begun to burn all the cornfields in his neighbourhood.

The writers of whom we speak should have considered this. They should have considered, that, in patriotism such as it existed amongst the Greeks, there was nothing essentially and eternally good ; that an exclusive attachment to a particular society, though a natural, and, under certain restrictions, a most useful sentiment, implies no extraordinary attainments in wisdom or virtue ; that where it has existed in an intense degree, it has turned states into gangs of robbers, whom their mutual fidelity has rendered more dangerous, has given a character of peculiar atrocity to war, and has generated that worst of all political evils, the tyranny of nations over nations.

Enthusiastically attached to the name of liberty, these historians troubled themselves little about its definition. The Spartans, tor-

mented by ten thousand absurd restraints, unable to please themselves in the choice of their wives, their suppers, or their company, compelled to assume a peculiar manner, and to talk in a peculiar style, gloried in their liberty. The aristocracy of Rome repeatedly made liberty a plea for cutting off the favourites of the people. In almost all the little commonwealths of antiquity, liberty was used as a pretext for measures directed against everything which makes liberty valuable, for measures which stifled discussion, corrupted the administration of justice, and discouraged the accumulation of property. The writers, whose works we are considering, confounded the sound with the substance, and the means with the end. Their imaginations were inflamed by mystery. They conceived of liberty as monks conceive of love, as Cockneys conceive of the happiness and innocence of rural life, as novel-reading sempstresses conceive of Almack's and Grosvenor Square, accomplished marquesses and handsome colonels of the guards. In the relation of events, and the delineation of characters, they have paid little attention to facts, to the costume of the times of which they pretend to treat, or to the general principles of human nature. They have been faithful only to their own puerile and extravagant doctrines. Generals and statesmen are metamorphosed into magnanimous coxcombs, from whose fulsome virtues we turn away with disgust. The fine sayings and exploits of their heroes remind us of the insufferable perfections of Sir Charles Grandison, and affect us with a nausea similar to that which we feel when an actor, in one of Morton's or Kotzebue's plays, lays his hand on his heart, advances to the ground-lights, and mouths a moral sentence for the edification of the Gods.

These writers, men who knew not what it was to have a country, men who had never enjoyed political rights, brought into fashion an offensive cant about patriotism and zeal for freedom. What the English Puritans did for the language of Christianity, what Scuderi did for the language of love, they did for the language of public spirit. By habitual exaggeration they made it mean. By monotonous emphasis they made it feeble. They abused it till it became scarcely possible to use it with effect.

Their ordinary rules of morality are deduced from extreme cases. The common regimen which they prescribe for society is made up of those desperate remedies which only its most desperate distempers require. They look with peculiar complacency on actions, which even those who approve them consider as exceptions to laws of almost universal application—which bear so close an affinity to the most atrocious crimes, that, even where it may be unjust to censure them, it is unsafe to praise them. It is not strange, therefore, that some flagitious instances of perfidy and cruelty should have been passed unchallenged in such company, that grave moralists, with no personal interest at stake, should have extolled, in the highest terms, deeds of which the atrocity appalled even the infuriated factions in whose cause they were perpetrated. The part which Timoleon took in the assassination of his brother, shocked many of his own partisans. The recollection of it preyed long on his own mind. But it was reserved for historians who lived some centuries later to discover that his conduct was a glorious display of virtue, and to lament that, from the frailty of human nature, a man who could perform so great an exploit could repent of it.

The writings of these men, and of their modern imitators, have produced effects which deserve some notice. The English have been so long accustomed to political speculation, and have enjoyed so large a measure of practical liberty, that such works have produced little effect on their minds. We have classical associations and great names of our own, which we can confidently oppose to the most splendid of ancient times. Senate has not to our ears a sound so venerable as Parliament. We respect the Great Charter more than the laws of Solon. The Capitol and the Forum impress us with less awe than our own Westminster Hall and Westminster Abbey, the place where the great men of twenty generations have contended, the place where they sleep together ! The list of warriors and statesmen by whom our constitution was founded or preserved, from De Montfort down to Fox, may well stand a comparison with the *Fasti* of Rome. The dying thanksgiving of Sidney is as noble as the libation which Thræsea poured to Liberating Jove : and we think with far less pleasure of Cato tearing out his entrails, than of Russel saying, as he turned away from his wife, that the bitterness of death was past. Even those parts of our history, over which, on some accounts, we would gladly throw a veil, may be proudly opposed to those on which the moralists of antiquity loved most to dwell. The enemy of English liberty was not murdered by men whom he had pardoned and loaded with benefits. He was not stabbed in the back by those who smiled and cringed before his face. He was vanquished on fields of stricken battle ; he was arraigned, sentenced, and executed in the face of heaven and earth. Our liberty is neither Greek nor Roman ; but essentially English. It has a character of its own,—a character which has taken a tinge from the sentiments of the chivalrous ages, and which accords with the peculiarities of our manners and of our insular situation. It has a language, too, of its own, and a language singularly idiomatic, full of meaning to ourselves, scarcely intelligible to strangers.

Here, therefore, the effect of books, such as those which we have been considering, has been harmless. They have, indeed, given currency to many very erroneous opinions with respect to ancient history. They have heated the imaginations of boys. They have misled the judgment, and corrupted the taste, of some men of letters, such as Akenside and Sir William Jones. But on persons engaged in public affairs they have had very little influence. The foundations of our constitution were laid by men who knew nothing of the Greeks, but that they denied the orthodox procession, and cheated the Crusaders ; and nothing of Rome, but that the Pope lived there. Those who followed contented themselves with improving on the original plan. They found models at home ; and therefore they did not look for them abroad. But when enlightened men on the Continent began to think about political reformation, having no patterns before their eyes in their domestic history, they naturally had recourse to those remains of antiquity, the study of which is considered throughout Europe as an important part of education. The historians of whom we have been speaking had been members of large communities, and subjects of absolute sovereigns. Hence it is, as we have already said, that they commit such gross errors in speaking of the little republics of antiquity. Their works were now read in the spirit in which they had been written. They were read by men placed in circumstances closely resembling their own, unacquainted with the real nature of liberty, but inclined

to believe everything good which could be told respecting it. How powerfully these books impressed these speculative reformers is well known to all who have paid any attention to the French literature of the last century. But, perhaps, the writer on whom they produced the greatest effect was Vittorio Alfieri. In some of his plays, particularly in *Virginia*, *Timoleon*, and *Brutus the Younger*, he has even caricatured the extravagance of his masters.

It was not strange that the blind, thus led by the blind, should stumble. The transactions of the French Revolution, in some measure, took their character from these works. Without the assistance of these works, indeed, a revolution would have taken place,—a revolution productive of much good and much evil, tremendous, but shortlived evil, dearly purchased, but durable good. But it would not have been exactly such a revolution. The style, the accessories, would have been in many respects different. There would have been less of bombast in language, less of affectation in manner, less of solemn trifling and ostentatious simplicity. The acts of legislative assemblies, and the correspondence of diplomatists, would not have been disgraced by rants worthy only of a college declamation. The government of a great and polished nation would not have rendered itself ridiculous, by attempting to revive the usages of a world which had long passed away, or rather of a world which had never existed except in the description of a fantastic school of writers. These second-hand imitations resembled the originals about as much as the classical feast, with which the Doctor in *Peregrine Pickle* turned the stomachs of all his guests, resembled one of the suppers of Lucullus in the Hall of Apollo.

These were mere follies. But the spirit excited by these writers produced more serious effects. The greater part of the crimes which disgraced the revolution sprung, indeed, from the relaxation of law, from popular ignorance, from the remembrance of past oppression, from the fear of foreign conquest, from rapacity, from ambition, from party-spirit. But many atrocious proceedings must, doubtless, be ascribed to heated imagination, to perverted principle, to a distaste for what was vulgar in morals, and a passion for what was startling and dubious. Mr. Burke has touched on this subject with great felicity of expression: ‘The gradation of their republic,’ says he, ‘is laid in moral ‘ paradoxes. All those instances to be found in history, whether real ‘ or fabulous, of a doubtful public spirit, at which morality is per- ‘ plexed, reason is staggered, and from which affrighted nature recoils, ‘ are their chosen and almost sole examples for the instruction of ‘ their youth.’ This evil, we believe, is to be directly ascribed to the influence of the historians whom we have mentioned, and their modern imitators.

Livy had some faults in common with these writers; but on the whole he must be considered as forming a class by himself. No historian with whom we are acquainted has shown so complete an indifference to truth. He seems to have cared only about the picturesque effect of his book, and the honour of his country. On the other hand, we do not know, in the whole range of literature, an instance of a bad thing so well done. The painting of the narrative is beyond description vivid and graceful: the abundance of interesting sentiments and splendid imagery in the speeches is almost miraculous. His mind is a soil which is never overteemed, a fountain which never seems to trickle: it pours fourth profusely; yet it gives no sign of exhaustion.

It was probably to this exuberance of thought and language, always fresh, always sweet, always pure, no sooner yielded than repaired, that the critics applied that expression which has been so much discussed, *lactea ubertas*.

All the merits and all the defects of Livy take a colouring from the character of his nation. He was a writer peculiarly Roman; the proud citizen of a commonwealth, which had indeed lost the reality of liberty, but which still sacredly preserved its forms; in fact the subject of an arbitrary prince, but in his own estimation one of the masters of the world, with a hundred kings below him, and only the gods above him. He, therefore, looked back on former times with feelings far different from those which were naturally entertained by his Greek contemporaries, and which at a later period became general among men of letters throughout the Roman Empire. He contemplated the past with interest and delight, not because it furnished a contrast to the present, but because it had led to the present. He recurred to it, not to lose in proud recollections the sense of national degradation, but to trace the progress of national glory. It is true that his veneration for antiquity produced on him some of the effects which it produced on those who arrived at it by a very different road. He has something of their exaggeration, something of their cant, something of their fondness for anomalies and *lusus naturæ* in morality. Yet even here we perceive a difference. They talk rapturously of patriotism and liberty in the abstract. He does not seem to think any country but Rome deserving of love; nor is it for liberty as liberty, but for liberty as a part of the Roman institutions, that he is zealous.

Of the concise and elegant accounts of the campaigns of Cæsar little can be said. They are incomparable models for military despatches. But histories they are not, and do not pretend to be.

The ancient critics placed Sallust in the same rank with Livy; and unquestionably the small portion of his works which has come down to us is calculated to give a high opinion of his talents. But his style is not very pleasant: and his most powerful work, the account of the Conspiracy of Catiline, has rather the air of a clever party pamphlet than that of a history. It abounds with strange inconsistencies, which, unexplained as they are, necessarily excite doubts as to the fairness of the narrative. It is true, that many circumstances now forgotten may have been familiar to his contemporaries, and may have rendered passages clear to them which to us appear dubious and perplexing. But a great historian should remember that he writes for distant generations, for men who will perceive the apparent contradictions, and will possess no means of reconciling them. We can only vindicate the fidelity of Sallust at the expense of his skill. But, in fact, all the information which we have from contemporaries respecting this famous plot is liable to the same objection, and is read by discerning men with the same incredulity. It is all on one side. No answer has reached our times. Yet, on the showing of the accusers, the accused seem entitled to acquittal. Catiline, we are told, intrigued with a Vestal virgin, and murdered his own son. His house was a den of gamblers and debauchees. No young man could cross his threshold without danger to his fortune and reputation. Yet this is the man with whom Cicero was willing to coalesce in a contest for the first magistracy of the republic; and whom he described, long after the fatal termination of the conspiracy, as an accomplished hypocrite, by whom he had himself been deceived, and who

had acted with consummate skill the character of a good citizen and a good friend. We are told that the plot was the most wicked and desperate ever known; and, almost in the same breath, that the great body of the people, and many of the nobles, favoured it; that the richest citizens of Rome were eager for the spoliation of all property, and its highest functionaries for the destruction of all order; that Crassus, Cæsar, the Prætor Lentulus, one of the consuls of the year, one of the consuls elect, were proved or suspected to be engaged in a scheme for subverting institutions to which they owed the highest honours, and introducing universal anarchy. We are told, that a government, which knew all this, suffered the conspirator, whose rank, talents, and courage rendered him most dangerous, to quit Rome without molestation. We are told, that bondmen and gladiators were to be armed against the citizens. Yet we find that Catiline rejected the slaves who crowded to enlist in his army, lest, as Sallust himself expresses it, 'he should seem to identify their cause with that of the citizens.' Finally, we are told that the magistrate, who was universally allowed to have saved all classes of his countrymen from conflagration and massacre, rendered himself so unpopular by his conduct, that a marked insult was offered to him at the expiration of his office, and a severe punishment inflicted on him shortly after.

Sallust tells us what, indeed, the letters and speeches of Cicero sufficiently prove, that some persons considered the shocking and atrocious parts of the plot as mere inventions of the government, designed to excuse its unconstitutional measures. We must confess ourselves to be of that opinion. There was, undoubtedly, a strong party desirous to change the administration. While Pompey held the command of an army, they could not effect their purpose without preparing means for repelling force, if necessary, by force. In all this there is nothing different from the ordinary practice of Roman factions. The other charges brought against the conspirators are so inconsistent and improbable, that we give no credit whatever to them. If our readers think this scepticism unreasonable, let them turn to the contemporary accounts of the Popish plot: let them look over the votes of Parliament, and the speeches of the King; the charges of Scroggs, and the harangues of the managers employed against Strafford. A person, who should form his judgment from these pieces alone, would believe that London was set on fire by the Papists, and that Sir Edmondbury Godfrey was murdered for his religion. Yet these stories are now altogether exploded: they have been abandoned by statesmen to aldermen, by aldermen to clergymen, by clergymen to old women, and by old women to Sir Harcourt Lees.

Of the Latin historians, Tacitus was certainly the greatest. His style indeed is not only faulty in itself, but is, in some respects, peculiarly unfit for historical composition. He carries his love of effect far beyond the limits of moderation. He tells a fine story finely: but he cannot tell a plain story plainly. He stimulates till stimulants lose their power. Thucydides, as we have already observed, relates ordinary transactions with the unpretending clearness and succinctness of a gazette. His great powers of painting he reserves for events, of which the slightest details are interesting. The simplicity of the setting gives additional lustre to the brilliants. There are passages in the narrative of Tacitus superior to the best which can be quoted from Thucydides: but they are not enchased and relieved with the same skill; they are

far more striking when extracted from the body of the work to which they belong, than when they occur in their place, and are read in connexion with what precedes and follows.

In the delineation of character, Tacitus is unrivalled among historians, and has very few superiors among dramatists and novelists. By the delineation of character, we do not mean the practice of drawing up epigrammatic catalogues of good and bad qualities, and appending them to the names of eminent men. No writer, indeed, has done this more skilfully than Tacitus: but this is not his peculiar glory. All the persons who occupy a large space in his works have an individuality of character which seems to pervade all their words and actions. We know them as if we had lived with them. Claudius, Nero, Otho, both the Agrippinas, are master-pieces. But Tiberius is a still higher miracle of art. The historian undertook to make us intimately acquainted with a man singularly dark and inscrutable,—with a man whose real disposition long remained swathed up in intricate folds of factitious virtues; and over whose actions the hypocrisy of his youth, and the seclusion of his old age, threw a singular mystery. He was to exhibit the specious qualities of the tyrant in a light which might render them transparent, and enable us at once to perceive the covering and the vices which it concealed. He was to trace the gradations by which the first magistrate of a republic, a senator mingling freely in debate, a noble associating with his brother nobles, was transformed into an Asiatic sultan. He was to exhibit a character distinguished by courage, self-command, and profound policy, yet defiled by all

‘th’ extravagancy
And crazy ribaldry of fancy.’

He was to mark the gradual effect of advancing age and approaching death on this strange compound of strength and weakness; to exhibit the old sovereign of the world sinking into a dotage which, though it rendered his appetites eccentric and his temper savage, never impaired the powers of his stern and penetrating mind—conscious of failing strength, raging with capricious sensuality, yet to the last the keenest of observers, the most artful of dissemblers, and the most terrible of masters. The task was one of extreme difficulty. The execution is almost perfect.

The talent which is required to write history thus, bears a considerable affinity to the talent of a great dramatist. There is one obvious distinction. The dramatist creates, the historian only disposes. The difference is not in the mode of execution, but in the mode of conception. Shakespeare is guided by a model which exists in his imagination; Tacitus, by a model furnished from without. Hamlet is to Tiberius what the Laocoon is to the Newton of Roubilliac.

In this part of his art Tacitus certainly had neither equal nor second among the ancient historians. Herodotus, though he wrote in a dramatic form, had little of dramatic genius. The frequent dialogues which he introduces give vivacity and movement to the narrative; but are not strikingly characteristic. Xenophon is fond of telling his readers, at considerable length, what he thought of the persons whose adventures he relates; but he does not show them the men, and enable them to judge for themselves. The heroes of Livy are the most insipid of all beings, real or imaginary, the heroes of Plutarch always excepted. Indeed, the manner of Plutarch in this respect re-

minds us of the cookery of those continental inns, the horror of English travellers, in which a certain non-descript broth is kept constantly boiling, and copiously poured, without distinction, over every dish as it comes up to table. Thucydides, though at a wide interval, comes next to Tacitus. His Pericles, his Nicias, his Cleon, his Brasidas, are happily discriminated. The lines are few, the colouring faint; but the general air and expression is caught.

We begin, like the priest in *Don Quixote's* library, to be tired with taking down books one after another for separate judgment, and feel inclined to pass sentence on them in masses. We shall therefore, instead of pointing out the defects and merits of the different modern historians, state generally in what particulars they have surpassed their predecessors, and in what we conceive them to have failed.

They have certainly been, in one sense, far more strict in their adherence to truth than most of the Greek and Roman writers. They do not think themselves entitled to render their narrative interesting by introducing descriptions, conversations, and harangues, which have no existence but in their own imagination. This improvement was gradually introduced. History commenced among the modern nations of Europe, as it had commenced among the Greeks, in romance. Froissart was our Herodotus. Italy was to Europe what Athens was to Greece. In Italy, therefore, a more accurate and manly mode of narration was early introduced. Machiavelli and Guicciardini, in imitation of Livy and Thucydides, composed speeches for their historical personages. But as the classical enthusiasm which distinguished the age of Lorenzo and Leo gradually subsided, this absurd practice was abandoned. In France, we fear, it still, in some degree, keeps its ground. In our own country, a writer who should venture on it would be laughed to scorn. Whether the historians of the last two centuries tell more truth than those of antiquity, may perhaps be doubted; but it is quite certain that they tell fewer falsehoods.

In the philosophy of history, the moderns have very far surpassed the ancients. It is not, indeed, strange that the Greeks and Romans should not have carried the science of government, or any other experimental science, so far as it has been carried in our time; for the experimental sciences are generally in a state of progression. They were better understood in the seventeenth century than in the sixteenth, and in the eighteenth century than in the seventeenth. But this constant improvement, this natural growth of knowledge, will not altogether account for the immense superiority of the modern writers. The difference is a difference not in degree but of kind. It is not merely that new principles have been discovered, but that new faculties seem to be exerted. It is not that at one time the human intellect should have made but small progress, and at another time have advanced far; but that at one time it should have been stationary, and at another time constantly proceeding. In taste and imagination, in the graces of style, in the arts of persuasion, in the magnificence of public works, the ancients were at least our equals. They reasoned as justly as ourselves on subjects which required pure demonstration. But in the moral sciences they made scarcely any advance. During the long period which elapsed between the fifth century before the Christian era, and the fifth century after it, little perceptible progress was made. All the metaphysical discoveries of all the philosophers, from the time of Socrates to the northern invasion, are not to be compared in impor-

tance with those which have been made in England every fifty years since the time of Elizabeth. There is not the least reason to believe that the principles of government, legislation, and political economy were better understood in the time of Augustus Cæsar than in the time of Pericles. In our own country, the sound doctrines of trade and jurisprudence have been, within the lifetime of a single generation, dimly hinted, boldly propounded, defended, systematized, adopted by all reflecting men of all parties, quoted in legislative assemblies, incorporated into laws and treaties.

To what is this change to be attributed? Partly, no doubt, to the discovery of printing, a discovery which has not only diffused knowledge widely, but, as we have already observed, has also introduced into reasoning a precision unknown in those ancient communities, in which information was, for the most part, conveyed orally. There was, we suspect, another cause, less obvious, but still more powerful.

The spirit of the two most famous nations of antiquity was remarkably exclusive. In the time of Homer, the Greeks had not begun to consider themselves as a distinct race: they still looked with something of childish wonder and awe on the riches and wisdom of Sidon and Egypt. From what causes, and by what gradations, their feelings underwent a change, it is not easy to determine. Their history, from the Trojan to the Persian war, is covered with an obscurity broken only by dim and scattered gleams of truth. But it is certain that a great alteration took place. They regarded themselves as a separate people. They had common religious rites, and common principles of public law, in which foreigners had no part. In all their political systems, monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical, there was a strong family likeness. After the retreat of Xerxes and the fall of Mardonius, national pride rendered the separation between the Greeks and the barbarians complete. The conquerors considered themselves men of a superior breed, men who, in their intercourse with neighbouring nations, were to teach, and not to learn. They looked for nothing out of themselves. They borrowed nothing. They translated nothing. We cannot call to mind a single expression of any Greek writer, earlier than the age of Augustus, indicating an opinion, that anything worth reading could be written in any language except his own. The feelings which sprung from national glory were not altogether extinguished by national degradation. They were fondly cherished through ages of slavery and shame. The literature of Rome herself was regarded with contempt by those who had fled before her arms, and who bowed beneath her fasces. Voltaire says, in one of his six thousand pamphlets, that he was the first person who told the French that England had produced eminent men besides the Duke of Marlborough. Down to a very late period, the Greeks seem to have stood in need of similar information with respect to their masters. With Paulus Æmilius, Sylla, and Cæsar, they were well acquainted; but the notions which they entertained respecting Cicero and Virgil were, probably, not unlike those which Boileau may have formed about Shakespeare. Dionysius lived in the most splendid age of Latin poetry and eloquence. He was a critic, and, after the manner of his age, an able critic. He studied the language of Rome, associated with its learned men, and compiled its history. Yet he seems to have thought its literature valuable only for the purpose of illustrating its antiquities. His reading appears to have been confined to its public records, and to a few old

annalists. Once, and but once, if we remember rightly, he quotes Ennius, to solve a question of etymology. He has written much on the art of oratory; yet he has not mentioned the name of Cicero.

The Romans submitted to the pretensions of a race which they despised. Their epic poet, while he claimed for them pre eminence in the arts of government and war, acknowledged their inferiority in taste, eloquence, and science. Men of letters affected to understand the Greek language better than their own. Pomponius preferred the honour of becoming an Athenian, by intellectual naturalization, to all the distinctions which were to be acquired in the political contests of Rome. His great friend composed Greek poems and memoirs. It is well known that Petrarch considered that beautiful language in which his sonnets are written, as a barbarous jargon, and intrusted his fame to those wretched Latin hexameters, which, during the last four centuries, have scarcely found four readers. Many eminent Romans appear to have felt the same contempt for their native tongue as compared with the Greek. The prejudice continued to a very late period. Julian was as partial to the Greek language as Frederic the Great to the French: and it seems that he could not express himself with elegance in the dialect of the state which he ruled.

Even those Latin writers who did not carry this affectation so far, looked on Greece as the only fount of knowledge. From Greece they derived the measures of their poetry, and, indeed, all of poetry that can be imported. From Greece they borrowed the principles and the vocabulary of their philosophy. To the literature of other nations they do not seem to have paid the slightest attention. The sacred books of the Hebrews, for example, books which, considered merely as human compositions, are invaluable to the critic, the antiquarian, and the philosopher, seem to have been utterly unnoticed by them. The peculiarities of Judaism, and the rapid growth of Christianity, attracted their notice. They made war against the Jews. They made laws against the Christians. But they never opened the books of Moses. Juvenal quotes the Pentateuch with censure: the author of the treatise on 'the Sublime' quotes it with praise: but both of them quote it erroneously. When we consider what sublime poetry, what curious history, what striking and peculiar views of the Divine nature, and of the social duties of men, are to be found in the Jewish scriptures: when we consider that two sects, on which the attention of the government was constantly fixed, appealed to those scriptures as the rule of their faith and practice, this indifference is astonishing. The fact seems to be, that the Greeks admired only themselves, and that the Romans admired only themselves and the Greeks. Literary men turned away with disgust from modes of thought and expression so widely different from all that they had been accustomed to admire. The effect was narrowness and sameness of thought. Their minds, if we may so express ourselves, bred in and in, and were accordingly cursed with barrenness and degeneracy. No extraneous beauty or vigour was engrafted on the decaying stock. By an exclusive attention to one class of phenomena, by an exclusive taste for one species of excellence, the human intellect was stunted. Occasional coincidences were turned into general rules. Prejudices were confounded with instincts. On man, as he was found in a particular state of society,—on government, as it had existed in a particular corner of the world, many just observations were made; but of man as man, or government as govern-

ment, little was known. Philosophy remained stationary. Slight changes, sometimes for the worse and sometimes for the better, were made in the superstructure. But nobody thought of examining the foundations.

The vast despotism of the Cæsars, gradually effacing all national peculiarities, and assimilating the remotest provinces of the Empire to each other, augmented the evil. At the close of the third century after Christ, the prospects of mankind were fearfully dreary. A system of etiquette, as pompously frivolous as that of the Escorial, had been established. A sovereign almost invisible; a crowd of dignitaries minutely distinguished by badges and titles; rhetoricians who said nothing but what had been said ten thousand times; schools in which nothing was taught but what had been known for ages;—such was the machinery provided for the government and instruction of the most enlightened part of the human race. That great community was then in danger of experiencing a calamity far more terrible than any of the quick, inflammatory, destroying maladies, to which nations are liable,—a tottering, drivelling, paralytic longevity, the immortality of the Struldbrugs, a Chinese civilization. It would be easy to indicate many points of resemblance between the subjects of Diocletian and the people of that Celestial Empire where, during many centuries, nothing has been learned or unlearned; where government, where education, where the whole system of life, is a ceremony; where knowledge forgets to increase and multiply, and, like the talent buried in the earth, or the pound wrapped up in the napkin, experiences neither waste nor augmentation.

The torpor was broken by two great revolutions, the one moral, the other political, the one from within, the other from without. The victory of Christianity over Paganism, considered with relation to this subject only, was of great importance. It overthrew the old system of morals, and with it much of the old system of metaphysics. It furnished the orator with new topics of declamation, and the logician with new points of controversy. Above all, it introduced a new principle, of which the operation was constantly felt in every part of society. It stirred the stagnant mass from the inmost depths. It excited all the passions of a stormy democracy in the quiet and listless population of an overgrown empire. The fear of heresy did what the sense of oppression could not do: it changed men, accustomed to be turned over like sheep from tyrant to tyrant, into devoted partizans and obstinate rebels. The tones of an eloquence which had been silent for ages resounded from the pulpit of Gregory. A spirit, which had been extinguished on the plains of Philippi, revived in Athanasius and Ambrose.

Yet even this remedy was not sufficiently violent for the disease. It did not prevent the empire of Constantinople from relapsing, after a short paroxysm of excitement, into a state of stupefaction, to which history furnishes scarcely any parallel. We there find that a polished society, a society in which a most intricate and elaborate system of jurisprudence was established, in which the arts of luxury were well understood, in which the works of the great ancient writers were preserved and studied, existed for nearly a thousand years without making one great discovery in science, or producing one book which is read by any but curious inquirers. There were tumults, too, and controversies, and wars, in abundance: and these things, bad as they are in

themselves, have generally been favourable to the progress of the intellect. But here they tormented without stimulating. The waters were troubled, but no healing influence descended. The agitations resembled the grinnings and writhings of a galvanized corpse, not the struggles of an athletic man.

From this miserable state the Western Empire was saved by the fiercest and most destroying visitation with which God has ever chastened his creatures — the invasion of the Northern nations. Such a cure was required for such a distemper. The Fire of London, it has been observed, was a blessing : it burned down the city, but it burned out the plague. The same may be said of the tremendous devastation of the Roman dominions. It annihilated the noisome recesses in which lurked the seeds of great moral maladies : it cleared an atmosphere fatal to the health and vigour of the human mind. It cost Europe a thousand years of barbarism to escape the fate of China.

At length the terrible purification was accomplished ; and the second civilization of mankind commenced, under circumstances which afforded a strong security that it would never retrograde and never pause. Europe was now a great federal community : her numerous states were united by the easy ties of international law and a common religion. Their institutions, their languages, their manners, their tastes in literature, their modes of education, were widely different. Their connexion was close enough to allow of mutual observation and improvement, yet not so close as to destroy the idioms of national opinion and feeling.

The balance of moral and intellectual influence thus established between the nations of Europe is far more important than the balance of political power. Indeed, we are inclined to think that the latter is valuable principally because it tends to maintain the former. The civilized world has thus been preserved from an uniformity of character fatal to all improvement. Every part of it has been illuminated with light reflected from every other. Competition has produced activity where monopoly would have produced sluggishness. The number of experiments in moral science, which the speculator has an opportunity of witnessing, has been increased beyond all calculation. Society and human nature, instead of being seen in a single point of view, are presented to him under ten thousand different aspects. By observing the manners of surrounding nations, by studying their literature, by comparing it with that of his own country and of the ancient republics, he is enabled to correct those errors into which the most acute men must fall when they reason from a single species to a genus. He learns to distinguish what is local from what is universal ; what is transitory from what is eternal ; to discriminate between exceptions and rules ; to trace the operation of disturbing causes ; to separate those general principles which are always true and everywhere applicable, from the accidental circumstances with which, in every community, they are blended, and with which, in an isolated community, they are confounded by the most philosophical mind.

Hence it is, that in generalization, the writers of modern times have far surpassed those of antiquity. The historians of our own country are unequalled in depth and precision of reason ; and even in the works of our mere compilers, we often meet with speculations beyond the reach of Thucydides or Tacitus.

But it must, at the same time, be admitted that they have characteristic faults, so closely connected with their characteristic merits, and

of such magnitude, that it may well be doubted whether, on the whole, this department of literature has gained or lost during the last two-and-twenty centuries.

The best historians of later times have been seduced from truth, not by their imagination, but by their reason. They far excel their predecessors in the art of deducing general principles from facts; but unhappily they have fallen into the error of distorting facts to suit general principles. They arrive at a theory from looking at some of the phenomena, and the remaining phenomena they strain or curtail to suit the theory. For this purpose it is not necessary that they should assert what is absolutely false, for all questions in morals and politics are questions of comparison and degree. Any proposition which does not involve a contradiction in terms may, by possibility, be true; and if all the circumstances which raise a probability in its favour be stated and enforced, and those which lead to an opposite conclusion be omitted or lightly passed over, it may appear to be demonstrated. In every human character and transaction there is a mixture of good and evil: a little exaggeration, a little suppression, a judicious use of epithets, a watchful and searching scepticism with respect to the evidence on one side, a convenient credulity with respect to every report or tradition on the other, may easily make a saint of *Laud*, or a tyrant of Henry the Fourth.

This species of misrepresentation abounds in the most valuable works of modern historians. Herodotus tells his story like a slovenly witness, who, heated by partialities and prejudices, unacquainted with the established rules of evidence, and uninstructed as to the obligations of his oath, confounds what he imagines with what he has seen and heard, and brings out facts, reports, conjectures, and fancies, in one mass. Hume is an accomplished advocate: without positively asserting much more than he can prove, he gives prominence to all the circumstances which support his case; he glides lightly over those which are unfavourable to it; his own witnesses are applauded and encouraged; the statements which seem to throw discredit on them are controverted; the contradictions into which they fall are explained away; a clear and connected abstract of their evidence is given. Everything that is offered on the other side is scrutinized with the utmost severity; every suspicious circumstance is a ground for comment and invective; what cannot be denied is extenuated, or passed by without notice; concessions even are sometimes made — but this insidious candour only increases the effect of the vast mass of sophistry.

We have mentioned Hume, as the ablest and most popular writer of his class; but the charge which we have brought against him is one to which all our most distinguished historians are in some degree obnoxious. Gibbon, in particular, deserves very severe censure. Of all the numerous culprits, however, none is more deeply guilty than Mr. Mitford. We willingly acknowledge the obligations which are due to his talents and industry. The modern historians of Greece had been in the habit of writing as if the world had learned nothing new during the last sixteen hundred years. Instead of illustrating the events which they narrated, by the philosophy of a more enlightened age, they judged of antiquity by itself alone. They seemed to think that notions, long driven from every other corner of literature, had a prescriptive right to occupy this last fastness. They considered all the

ancient historians as equally authentic. They scarcely made any distinction between him who related events at which he had himself been present, and him who five hundred years after composed a philosophic romance for a society which had in the interval undergone a complete change. It was all Greek, and all true ! The centuries which separated Plutarch from Thucydides seemed as nothing to men who lived in an age so remote. The distance of time produced an error similar to that which is sometimes produced by distance of place. There are many good ladies who think that all the people in India live together, and who charge a friend setting out for Calcutta with kind messages to Bombay. To Rollin and Barthelemi, in the same manner, all the classics were contemporaries.

Mr. Mitford certainly introduced great improvements ; he showed us that men who wrote in Greek and Latin sometimes told lies ; he showed us that ancient history might be related in such a manner as to furnish not only illusions to schoolboys, but important lessons to statesmen. From that love of theatrical effect and high-flown sentiment which had poisoned almost every other work on the same subject, his book is perfectly free. But his passion for a theory as false, and far more ungenerous, led him substantially to violate truth in every page. Statements unfavourable to democracy are made with unhesitating confidence, and with the utmost bitterness of language. Every charge brought against a monarch, or an aristocracy, is sifted with the utmost care. If it cannot be denied, some palliating supposition is suggested, or we are at least reminded that some circumstances now unknown *may* have justified what at present appears unjustifiable. Two events are reported by the same author in the same sentence ; their truth rests on the same testimony ; but the one supports the darling hypothesis, and the other seems inconsistent with it. The one is taken, and the other is left.

The practice of distorting narrative into a conformity with theory is a vice not so unfavourable as at first sight it may appear, to the interests of political science. We have compared the writers who indulge in it to advocates ; and we may add, that their conflicting fallacies, like those of advocates, correct each other. It has always been held, in the most enlightened nations, that a tribunal will decide a judicial question most fairly when it has heard two able men argue, as unfairly as possible, on the two opposite sides of it ; and we are inclined to think that this opinion is just. Sometimes, it is true, superior eloquence and dexterity will make the worse appear the better reason ; but it is at least certain that the judge will be compelled to contemplate the case under two different aspects. It is certain that no important consideration will altogether escape notice.

This is at present the state of history. The Poet Laureate appears for the Church of England, Lingard for the Church of Rome. Brodie has moved to set aside the verdicts obtained by Hume ; and the cause in which Mitford succeeded is, we understand, about to be reheard. In the midst of these disputes, however, history proper, if we may use the term, is disappearing. The high, grave, impartial summing up of Thucydides is nowhere to be found.

While our historians are practising all the arts of controversy, they miserably neglect the art of narration, the art of interesting the affections, and presenting pictures to the imagination. That a writer may produce these effects without violating truth is sufficiently proved by

many excellent biographical works. The immense popularity which well-written books of this kind have acquired, deserves the serious consideration of historians. Voltaire's *Charles the Twelfth*, Marmontel's *Memoirs*, Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Southey's account of Nelson, are perused with delight by the most frivolous and indolent. Whenever any tolerable book of the same description makes its appearance, the circulating libraries are mobbed; the book societies are in commotion; the new novel lies uncut; the magazines and newspapers fill their columns with extracts. In the meantime histories of great empires, written by men of eminent ability, lie unread on the shelves of ostentatious libraries.

The writers of history seem to entertain an aristocratical contempt for the writers of memoirs. They think it beneath the dignity of men, who describe the revolutions of nations, to dwell on the details which constitute the charm of biography. They have imposed on themselves a code of conventional decencies, as absurd as that which has been the bane of the French drama. The most characteristic and interesting circumstances are omitted or softened down, because, as we are told, they are too trivial for the majesty of history. The majesty of history seems to resemble the majesty of the poor King of Spain, who died a martyr to ceremony, because the proper dignitaries were not at hand to render him assistance.

That history would be more amusing if this etiquette were relaxed, will, we suppose, be acknowledged. But would it be less dignified or less useful? What do we mean, when we say that one past event is important, and another insignificant? No past event has any intrinsic importance. The knowledge of it is valuable only as it leads us to form just calculations with respect to the future. A history which does not serve this purpose, though it may be filled with battles, treaties, and commotions, is as useless as the series of turnpike-tickets collected by Sir Matthew Mite.

Let us suppose that Lord Clarendon, instead of filling hundreds of folio pages with copies of state papers, in which the same assertions and contradictions are repeated, till the reader is overpowered with weariness, had condescended to be the Boswell of the Long Parliament. Let us suppose that he had exhibited to us the wise and lofty self-government of Hampden, leading while he seemed to follow, and propounding unanswerable arguments in the strongest forms, with the modest air of an inquirer anxious for information; the delusions which misled the noble spirit of Vane; the coarse fanaticism which concealed the yet loftier genius of Cromwell, destined to control a mutinous army and a factious people, to abase the flag of Holland, to arrest the victorious arms of Sweden, and to hold the balance firm between the rival monarchies of France and Spain. Let us suppose that he had made his Cavaliers and Roundheads talk in their own style; that he had reported some of the ribaldry of Rupert's pages, and some of the cant of Harrison and Fleetwood. Would not his work in that case have been more interesting? Would it not have been more accurate?

A history, in which every particular incident may be true, may on the whole be false. The circumstances which have most influence on the happiness of mankind, the changes of manners and morals, the transition of communities from poverty to wealth, from knowledge to ignorance, from ferocity to humanity,—these are, for the most part, noiseless revolutions. Their progress is rarely indicated by what his-

torians are pleased to call important events. They are not achieved by armies, or enacted by senates. They are sanctioned by no treaties, and recorded in no archives. They are carried on in every school, in every church, behind ten thousand counters, at ten thousand firesides. The upper current of society presents no certain criterion by which we can judge of the direction in which the under current flows. We read of defeats and victories. But we know that nations may be miserable amidst victories, and prosperous amidst defeats. We read of the fall of wise ministers, and of the rise of profligate favourites. But we must remember how small a proportion the good or evil effected by a single statesman can bear to the good or evil of a great social system.

Bishop Watson compares a geologist to a gnat mounted on an elephant, and laying down theories as to the whole internal structure of the vast animal, from the phenomena of the hide. The comparison is unjust to the geologists; but it is very applicable to those historians who write as if the body politic were homogeneous, who look only on the surface of affairs, and never think of the mighty and various organization which lies deep below.

In the works of such writers as these, England, at the close of the Seven Year's War, is in the highest state of prosperity: at the close of the American war she is in a miserable and degraded condition; as if the people were not on the whole as rich, as well governed, and as well educated, at the latter period as at the former. We have read books called Histories of England, under the reign of George the Second, in which the rise of Methodism is not even mentioned. A hundred years hence this breed of authors will, we hope, be extinct. If it should still exist, the late ministerial interregnum will be described in terms which will seem to imply that all government was at an end; that the social contract was annulled, and that the hand of every man was against his neighbour, until the wisdom and virtue of the new cabinet educed order out of the chaos of anarchy. We are quite certain that misconceptions as gross prevail at this moment, respecting many important parts of our annals.

The effect of historical reading is analogous, in many respects, to that produced by foreign travel. The student, like the tourist, is transported into a new state of society. He sees new fashions: he hears new modes of expression. His mind is enlarged by contemplating the wide diversities of laws, of morals, and of manners. But men may travel far, and return with minds as contracted as if they had never stirred from their own market-town. In the same manner, men may know the dates of many battles, and the genealogies of many royal houses, and yet be no wiser. Most people look at past times, as princes look at foreign countries. More than one illustrious stranger has landed on our island amidst the shouts of a mob, has dined with the King, has hunted with the master of the stag-hounds, has seen the Guards reviewed, and a knight of the garter installed; has cantered along Regent Street; has visited St. Paul's, and noted down its dimensions; and has then departed, thinking that he has seen England. He has, in fact, seen a few public buildings, public men, and public ceremonies. But of the vast and complex system of society, of the fine shades of national character, of the practical operation of government and laws, he knows nothing. He who would understand these things rightly must not confine his observations to palaces and solemn days. He must see

ordinary men as they appear in their ordinary business and in their ordinary pleasures. He must mingle in the crowds of the exchange and the coffee-house. He must obtain admittance to the convivial table and the domestic hearth. He must bear with vulgar expressions. He must not shrink from exploring even the retreats of misery. He who wishes to understand the condition of mankind in former ages, must proceed on the same principle. If he attends only to public transactions, to wars, congresses, and debates, his studies will be as unprofitable as the travels of those imperial, royal, and serene sovereigns, who form their judgment of our island from having gone in state to a few fine sights, and from having held formal conferences with a few great officers.

The perfect historian is he in whose work the character and spirit of an age is exhibited in miniature. He relates no fact, he attributes no expression to his characters, which is not authenticated by sufficient testimony. But by judicious selection, rejection, and arrangement, he gives to truth those attractions which have been usurped by fiction. In his narrative a due subordination is observed; some transactions are prominent, others retire. But the scale on which he represents them is increased or diminished, not according to the dignity of the persons concerned in them, but according to the degree in which they elucidate the condition of society and the nature of man. He shows us the court, the camp, and the senate. But he shows us also the nation. He considers no anecdote, no peculiarity of manner, no familiar saying, as too insignificant for his notice, which is not too insignificant to illustrate the operation of laws, of religion, and of education, and to mark the progress of the human mind. Men will not merely be described, but will be made intimately known to us. The changes of manners will be indicated, not merely by a few general phrases, or a few extracts from statistical documents, but by appropriate images presented in every line.

If a man, such as we are supposing, should write the history of England, he would assuredly not omit the battles, the sieges, the negotiations, the seditions, the ministerial changes. But with these he would intersperse the details which are the charm of historical romances. At Lincoln Cathedral there is a beautiful painted window, which was made by an apprentice out of the pieces of glass which had been rejected by his master. It is so far superior to every other in the church, that, according to the tradition, the vanquished artist killed himself from mortification. Sir Walter Scott, in the same manner, has used those fragments of truth which historians have scornfully thrown behind them, in a manner which may well excite their envy. He has constructed out of their gleanings works which, even considered as histories, are scarcely less valuable than theirs. But a truly great historian would reclaim those materials which the novelist has appropriated. The history of the government, and the history of the people, would be exhibited in that mode in which alone they can be exhibited justly, in inseparable conjunction and intermixture. We should not then have to look for the wars and votes of the Puritans in Clarendon, and for their phraseology in *Old Mortality*; for one half of King James in Hume, and for the other half in the *Fortunes of Nigel*.

The early part of our imaginary history would be rich with colouring from romance, ballad, and chronicle. We should find ourselves in the company of knights such as those of Froissart, and of pilgrims

such as those who rode with Chaucer from the Tabard. Society would be shown from the highest to the lowest,—from the royal cloth of state to the den of the outlaw; from the throne of the legate, to the chimney-corner where the begging friar regaled himself. Palmers, minstrels, crusaders,—the stately monastery, with the good cheer in its refectory, and the high-mass in its chapel,—the manor-house, with its hunting and hawking,—the tournament, with the heralds and ladies, the trumpets and the cloth of gold,—would give truth and life to the representation. We should perceive, in a thousand slight touches, the importance of the privileged burgher, and the fierce and haughty spirit which swelled under the collar of the degraded villain. The revival of letters would not merely be described in a few magnificent periods. We should discern, in innumerable particulars, the fermentation of mind, the eager appetite for knowledge, which distinguished the sixteenth from the fifteenth century. In the Reformation we should see, not merely a schism which changed the ecclesiastical constitution of England, and the mutual relations of the European powers, but a moral war which raged in every family, which set the father against the son, and the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. Henry would be painted with the skill of Tacitus. We should have the change of his character from his profuse and joyous youth, to his savage and imperious old age. We should perceive the gradual progress of selfish and tyrannical passions, in a mind not naturally insensible or ungenerous; and to the last we should detect some remains of that open and noble temper, which endeared him to a people whom he oppressed, struggling with the hardness of despotism, and the irritability of disease. We should see Elizabeth in all her weakness, and in all her strength, surrounded by the handsome favourites, whom she never trusted, and the wise old statesmen, whom she never dismissed, uniting in herself the most contradictory qualities of both her parents,—the coquetry, the caprice, the petty malice of Anne,—the haughty and resolute spirit of Henry. We have no hesitation in saying, that a great artist might produce a portrait of this remarkable woman, at least as striking as that in the novel of Kenilworth, without employing a single trait not authenticated by ample testimony. In the meantime, we should see arts cultivated, wealth accumulated, the conveniences of life improved. We should see the keeps, where nobles, insecure themselves, spread insecurity around them, gradually giving place to the halls of peaceful opulence, to the oriels of Longleat, and the stately pinnacles of Burleigh. We should see towns extended, deserts cultivated, the hamlets of fishermen turned into wealthy havens, the meal of the peasant improved, and his hut more commodiously furnished. We should see those opinions and feelings which produced the great struggle against the house of Stuart slowly growing up in the bosom of private families, before they manifested themselves in parliamentary debates. Then would come the Civil War. Those skirmishes, on which Clarendon dwells so minutely, would be told, as Thucydides would have told them; with perspicuous conciseness. They are merely connecting links. But the great characteristics of the age, the loyal enthusiasm of the brave English gentry, the fierce licentiousness of the swearing, dicing, drunken reprobates, whose excesses disgraced the royal cause,—the austerity of the Presbyterian Sabbaths in the city, the extravagance of the independent preachers in the camp, the precise garb, the severe

countenance, the petty scruples, the affected accent, the absurd names and phrases which marked the Puritans,—the valour, the policy, the public spirit, which lurked beneath these ungraceful disguises,—the dreams of the raving Fifth-monarchy-man,—the dreams, scarcely less wild, of the philosophic republican,—all these would enter into the representation, and render it at once more exact and more striking.

The instruction derived from history, thus written, would be of a vivid and practical character. It would be received by the imagination as well as by the reason. It would be not merely traced on the mind, but branded into it. Many truths, too, would be learned, which can be learned in no other manner. As the history of states is generally written, the greatest and most momentous revolutions seem to come upon them like supernatural inflictions, without warning or cause. But the fact is, that such revolutions are almost always the consequences of moral changes, which have gradually passed on the mass of the community, and which ordinarily proceed far, before their progress is indicated by any public measure. An intimate knowledge of the domestic history of nations, is therefore absolutely necessary to the prognosis of political events. A narrative, defective in this respect, is as useless as a medical treatise, which should pass by all the symptoms attendant on the early stage of a disease, and mention only what occurs when the patient is beyond the reach of remedies.

A historian, such as we have been attempting to describe, would indeed be an intellectual prodigy. In his mind, powers, scarcely compatible with each other, must be tempered into an exquisite harmony. We shall sooner see another Shakespeare or another Homer. The highest excellence to which any single faculty can be brought, would be less surprising than such a happy and delicate combination of qualities. Yet the contemplation of imaginary models is not an unpleasant or useless employment of the mind. It cannot indeed produce perfection, but it produces improvement, and nourishes that generous and liberal fastidiousness, which is not inconsistent with the strongest sensibility to merit, and which, while it exalts our conceptions of the art, does not render us unjust to the artist.

CERVANTES, FIELDING, SMOLLETT, RICHARDSON, STERNE,
MISS EDGEWORTH, and MISS BURNEY.*

THERE is an exclamation in one of Gray's letters — 'Be mine to read eternal new romances of Marivaux and Crebillon!' If we did not utter a similar aspiration at the conclusion of the *Wanderer*, it was not from any want of affection for the class of writing to which it belongs; for, without going quite so far as the celebrated French philosopher, who thought that more was to be learnt from good novels and romances, than from the gravest treatises on history and morality, we must confess, that there are few works to which we oftener turn for profit or delight, than to the standard productions in this species of

* The *Wanderer*, or *Female Difficulties*, by Madame D'Arblay. — Vol. xxiv. page 320. February, 1815.

composition. With the exception of the violently satirical, and the violently sentimental specimens of the art, we find there the closest imitation of men and manners; and are admitted to examine the very web and texture of society, as it really exists, and as we meet with it when we come into the world. If the style of poetry has ‘something more divine in it,’ this savours more of humanity. We are brought acquainted with an infinite variety of characters—all a little more amusing, and, for the greater part, more true to general nature than those which we meet with in actual life—and have our moral impressions far more frequently called out, and our moral judgments exercised, than in the busiest career of existence. As a record of past manners and opinions, too, such writings afford both more minute and more abundant information than any other. To give one example only:—We should really be at a loss where to find, in any authentic documents of the same period, so satisfactory an account of the general state of society, and of moral, political and religious feeling, in the reign of George II, as we meet with in the *Adventures of Joseph Andrews* and his friend Mr. Abraham Adams. This work, indeed, we take to be a perfect piece of statistics in its kind; and do not know from what other quarter we could have acquired the solid information it contains, even as to this comparatively recent period. What a thing it would be to have such a work of the age of Pericles or Alexander! and how much more would it teach us as to the true character and condition of the people among whom it was produced, than all the tragedies and histories, and odes and orations, that have been preserved of their manufacture! In looking into such grave and ostentatious performances, we see little but the rigid skeleton of public transactions—exaggerations of party zeal, and vestiges of literary ambition; and if we wish really to know what was the state of manners and of morals, and in what way, and into what forms, principles and institutions were actually moulded in practice, we cannot do better than refer to the works of those writers, who, having no other object than to imitate nature, could only hope for success from the fidelity of their pictures; and were bound (in their own defence) to reduce the boasts of vague theorists, and the exaggerations of angry disputants, to the mortifying standard of reality.

We will here confess, however, that we are a little prejudiced on the point in question; and that the effect of many fine speculations has been lost upon us, from an early familiarity with the most striking passages in the little work to which we have just alluded. Thus, nothing can be more captivating than the description somewhere given by Mr. Burke, of the indissoluble connexion between learning and nobility; and of the respect universally paid by wealth to piety and morals. But the effect of this splendid representation has always been spoiled to us, by our recollection of Parson Adams sitting over his cup of ale in Sir Thomas Booby’s kitchen. Echard ‘on the Contempt of the Clergy,’ in like manner, is certainly a very good book, and its general doctrine most just and reasonable; but an unlucky impression of the reality of Parson Trulliber always checks, in us, the respectful emotions to which it should give rise: while the lecture which Lady Booby reads to Lawyer Scout on the expulsion of Joseph and Fanny from the parish, casts an unhappy shade over the splendid pictures of practical jurisprudence that are to be found in the works of Blackstone or De Lolme. The most moral writers, after all, are those who do not pretend to inculcate any moral: The professed moralist almost unavoidably dege-

nerates into the partisan of a system ; and the philosopher warps the evidence to his own purpose. But the painter of manners gives the facts of human nature, and leaves us to draw the inference : if we are not able to do this, or do it ill, at least it is our own fault.

The first-rate writers in this class are of course few ; but those few we may reckon, without scruple, among the greatest ornaments and the best benefactors of our kind. There is a certain set of them, who, as it were, take their rank by the side of reality, and are appealed to as evidence on all questions concerning human nature. The principal of these are Cervantes and Le Sage ; and, among ourselves, Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, and Sterne.* As this is a department of criticism which deserves more attention than we have ever yet bestowed on it, we shall venture to treat it a little in detail ; and endeavour to contribute something towards settling the standard of excellence, both as to degree and kind, in these several writers.

We shall begin with the renowned history of Don Quixote ; who always presents something more stately, more romantic, and at the same time more real to our imagination, than any other hero upon record. His lineaments, his accoutrements, his pasteboard visor, are familiar to us, as the recollections of our early home. The spare and upright figure of the hero paces distinctly before our eyes ; and Mambino's helmet still glitters in the sun ! We not only feel the greatest love and veneration for the knight himself, but a certain respect for all those connected with him — the Curate, and Master Nicholas the barber — Sancho and Dapple — and even for Rosinante's leanness and his errors ! Perhaps there is no work which combines so much originality with such an air of truth. Its popularity is almost unexampled ; and yet its real merits have not been sufficiently understood. The story is the least part of them ; though the blunders of Sancho, and the unlucky adventures of his master, are what naturally catch the attention of ordinary readers. The pathos and dignity of the sentiments are often disguised under the ludicrousness of the subject ; and provoke laughter when they might well draw tears. The character of Don Quixote itself is one of the most perfect disinterestedness. He is an enthusiast of the most amiable kind — of a nature equally open, gentle and generous ; a lover of truth and justice, and one who had brooded over the fine dreams of chivalry and romance, till the dazzling visions cheated his brain into a belief of their reality. There cannot, in our opinion, be a greater mistake than to consider Don Quixote as a merely satirical work, or an attempt to explode, by coarse raillery, ' the long forgotten order of chivalry.' There could be no need to explode what no longer existed. Besides, Cervantes himself was a man of the most sanguine and enthusiastic temperament ; and even through the crazed and battered figure of the knight, the spirit of chivalry shines out with undiminished lustre ; and one might almost imagine that the author had half-designed to revive the example of past ages, and once more ' witch the world with noble horsemanship ;' and had veiled the design, in scorn of the degenerate age to which it was addressed, under this fantastic and imperfect disguise of romantic and ludicrous exaggeration. However that may be, the spirit which the

* We have not forgotten De Foe as one of our own writers. The author of Robinson Crusoe was an Englishman ; and one of those Englishmen who make us proud of the name.

book breathes, to those who relish and understand it best, is unquestionably the spirit of chivalry : nor perhaps is it too much to say, that, if ever the flame of Spanish liberty is destined to break forth, wrapping the tyrant and the tyranny in one consuming blaze, it is owing to Cervantes and his knight of La Mancha, that the spark of generous sentiment and romantic enterprise from which it must be kindled, has not been quite extinguished.

The character of Sancho is not more admirable in the execution, than in the conception, as a relief to that of the knight. The contrast is as picturesque and striking as that between the figures of Rosinante and Dapple. Never was there so complete a *partie quarrée* ; — they answer to one another at all points. Nothing can surpass the truth of physiognomy in the description of the master and man, both as to body and mind ; — the one lean and tall, the other round and short ; — the one heroical and courteous, the other selfish and servile ; — the one full of high-flown fancies, the other a bag of proverbs ; — the one always starting some romantic scheme, the other always keeping to the safe side of tradition and custom. The gradual ascendancy, too, obtained by Don Quixote over Sancho, is as finely managed as it is characteristic. Credulity, and a love of the marvellous, are as natural to ignorance as selfishness and cunning. Sancho by degrees becomes a kind of lay-brother of the order ; acquires a taste for adventures in his own way, and is made all but an entire convert, by the discovery of the hundred crowns in one of his most comfortless journeys. Towards the end, his regret at being forced to give up the pursuit of knight-errantry, almost equals his master's ; and he seizes the proposal of Don Quixote to turn shepherds, with the greatest avidity, — still applying it, however, in his own fashion ; for while the Don is ingeniously torturing the names of his humble acquaintance into classical terminations, and contriving scenes of gallantry and song, Sancho exclaims, ‘ Oh, what delicate wooden spoons shall I carve ! what crumbs and cream shall I devour ! ’ — forgetting, in his milk and fruits, the pullets and geese at Camacho's wedding.

This intuitive perception of the hidden analogies of things, or, as it may be called, this *instinct of imagination*, is what stamps the character of genius on the productions of art, more than any other circumstance : for it works unconsciously, like nature, and receives its impressions from a kind of inspiration. There is more of this unconscious power in Cervantes, than in any other author, except Shakespeare. Something of the same kind extends itself to all the subordinate parts and characters of the work. Thus we find the curate confidentially informing Don Quixote, that if he could get the ear of the government, he has something of considerable importance to propose for the good of the state ; and the knight afterwards meets with a young gentleman, who is a candidate for poetical honours, with a mad lover, a forsaken damsel, &c. — all delineated with the same inimitable force, freedom, and fancy. The whole work breathes that air of romance, — that aspiration after imaginary good, — that longing after something more than we possess, that in all places, and in all conditions of life,

———— ‘ still prompts the eternal sigh,
‘ For which we wish to live, or dare to die ! ’

The characters in Don Quixote are strictly individuals ; that is, they do not belong to, but form a class of themselves. In other words, the

actions and manners of the chief *dramatis personæ* do not arise out of the actions and manners of those around them, or the condition of life in which they are placed, but out of the peculiar dispositions of the persons themselves, operated upon by certain impulses of imagination and accident: yet these impulses are so true to nature, and their operation so truly described, that we not only recognize the fidelity of the representation, but recognize it with all the advantages of novelty superadded. They are unlike any thing we have actually seen — may be said to be purely ideal — and yet familiarize themselves more readily with our imagination, and are retained more strongly in memory, than perhaps any others: — they are never lost in the crowd. One test of the truth of this ideal painting is, the number of allusions which Don Quixote has furnished to the whole of civilized Europe — that is to say, of appropriate cases, and striking illustrations of the universal principles of our nature. The common incidents and descriptions of human life are, however, quite familiar and natural; and we have nearly the same insight given us here, into the characters of inn-keepers, bar-maids, ostlers, and puppet-show men, as in Fielding himself. There is a much greater mixture, however, of sentiment with *naïveté*, of the pathetic with the quaint and humorous, than there ever is in Fielding. We might instance the story of the country man, whom Don Quixote and Sancho met in their search after Dulcinea, driving his mules to plough at break of day, and ‘singing the ancient ballad of Roncesvalles!’ The episodes which are introduced, are excellent; but have, upon the whole, been over-rated. Compared with the serious tales in Boccaccio, they are trifling. That of Marcella, the fair shepherdess, is the best. We will only add, that Don Quixote is an entirely original work in its kind, and that the author has the highest honour which can belong to one, that of being the founder of a new style of writing.

There is another Spanish novel, *Gusman d’Alfarache*, nearly of the same age as Don Quixote, and of great genius, though it can hardly be ranked as a novel, or a work of imagination. It is a series of strange adventures, rather drily told, but accompanied by the most severe and sarcastic commentary. The satire, the wit, the eloquence, and reasoning, are of the most powerful kind; but they are didactic, rather than dramatic. They would suit a sermon or a pasquinade better than a romance. Still there are in this extraordinary book, occasional sketches of character, and humorous descriptions, to which it would be difficult to produce any thing superior. This work, which is hardly known in this country except by name, has the credit, without any reason, of being the original of *Gil Blas*. There is only one incident the same, that of the supper at the inn. In all other respects, these two works are the very reverse of each other, both in their excellences and defects.

Gil Blas is, next to Don Quixote, more generally read and admired than any other novel — and, in one sense, deservedly so: for it is at the head of its class, though that class is very different from, and inferior to the other. There is very little individual character in *Gil Blas*. The author is a describer of manners, and not of character. He does not take the elements of human nature, and work them up into new combinations (which is the excellence of Don Quixote); nor trace the peculiar and striking combinations of folly and knavery as they are to be found in real life (like Fielding); but he takes off, as it were, the general habitual impression which circumstances make on certain conditions of life, and moulds all his characters accordingly. All the

persons whom he introduces carry about with them the badge of their profession; and you see little more of them than their costume. He describes men as belonging to certain classes in society — the highest, generally, and the lowest, and such as are found in great cities — not as they are in themselves, or with the individual differences which are always to be found in nature. His hero, in particular, has no character but that of the accidental circumstances in which he is placed. His priests are only described as priests: his valets, his players, his women, his courtiers, and his sharpers are all the same. Nothing can well exceed the monotony of the work in this respect; — at the same time that nothing can exceed the truth and precision with which the general manners of these different characters are preserved, nor the felicity of the particular traits by which their leading foibles are brought out to notice. Thus, the Archbishop of Grenada will remain an everlasting memento of the weakness of human vanity; and the account of Gil Blas's legacy, of the uncertainty of human expectations. This novel is as deficient in the fable as in the characters. It is not a regularly constructed story, but a series of adventures told with equal gaiety and good-sense, and in the most graceful style possible.

It has been usual to class our own great novelists as imitators of one or other of these two writers. Fielding, no doubt, is more like Don Quixote than Gil Blas; Smollett is more like Gil Blas than Don Quixote; but there is not much resemblance in either case. Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* is a more direct instance of imitation. Richardson can scarcely be called an imitator of any one; or, if he is, it is of the sentimental refinement of Marivaux, or the verbose gallantry of the writers of the seventeenth century.

There is very little to warrant the common idea, that Fielding was an imitator of Cervantes, — except his own declaration of such an intention in the title-page of *Joseph Andrews*, — the romantic turn of the character of Parson Adams (the only romantic character in his works), — and the proverbial humour of Partridge, which is kept up only for a few pages. Fielding's novels are, in general, thoroughly his own; and they are thoroughly English. What they are most remarkable for is, neither sentiment, nor imagination, nor wit, nor humour, though there is a great deal of this last quality; but profound knowledge of human nature — at least of English nature — and masterly pictures of the characters of men as he saw them existing. This quality distinguishes all his works, and is shown almost equally in all of them. As a painter of real life, he was equal to Hogarth: as a mere observer of human nature, he was little inferior to Shakespeare, though without any of the genius and poetical qualities of his mind. His humour is less rich and laughable than Smollett's; — his wit as often misses as hits; — he has none of the fine pathos of Richardson or Sterne: — but he has brought together a greater variety of characters in common life, marked with more distinct peculiarities, and without an atom of caricature, than any other novel writer whatever. The extreme subtilty of observation on the springs of human conduct in ordinary characters, is only equalled by the ingenuity of contrivance in bringing those springs into play in such a manner as to lay open their smallest irregularity. The detection is always complete, and made with the certainty and skill of a philosophical experiment, and the ease and simplicity of a casual observation. The truth of the imitation is indeed so great, that it has been argued that Fielding must

have had his materials ready-made to his hands, and was merely a transcriber of local manners and individual habits. For this conjecture, however, there seems to be no foundation. His representations, it is true, are local and individual, but they are not the less profound and natural. The feeling of the general principles of human nature operating in particular circumstances is always intense, and uppermost in his mind; and he makes use of incident and situation, only to bring out character.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to give any illustration of these remarks. Tom Jones is full of them. The moral of this book has been objected to, and not altogether without reason—but a more serious objection has been made to the want of refinement and elegance in the two principal characters. We never feel this objection, indeed, while we are reading the book: but at other times, we have something like a lurking suspicion that Jones was but an awkward fellow, and Sophia a pretty simpleton. We do not know how to account for this effect, unless it is that Fielding's constantly assuring us of the beauty of his hero, and the good sense of his heroine, at last produces a distrust of both. The story of Tom Jones is allowed to be unrivalled: and it is this circumstance, together with the vast variety of characters, that has given the history of a Foundling so decided a preference over Fielding's other novels. The characters themselves, both in Amelia and Joseph Andrews, are quite equal to any of those in Tom Jones. The account of Miss Mathews and Ensign Hibbert—the way in which that lady reconciles herself to the death of her father—the inflexible Colonel Bath, the insipid Mrs. James, the complaisant Colonel Trent—the demure, sly, intriguing, equivocal Mrs. Bennet—the lord who is her seducer, and who attempts afterwards to seduce Amelia by the same mechanical process of a concert-ticket, a book, and the disguise of a great coat—his little fat short-nosed, red-faced, good-humoured accomplice the keeper of the lodging-house, who having no pretensions to gallantry herself, has a disinterested delight in forwarding the intrigues and pleasures of others, (to say nothing of honest Atkinson, the story of the miniature-picture of Amelia, and the hashed mutton, which are in a different style,) are master pieces of description. The whole scene at the lodging-house, the masquerade, &c. in Amelia, is equal in interest to the parallel scenes in Tom Jones, and even more refined in the knowledge of character. For instance, Mrs. Bennet is superior to Mrs. Fitzpatrick in her own way. The uncertainty in which the event of her interview with her former seducer is left, is admirable. Fielding was a master of what may be called the *double entendre* of character, and surprises you no less by what he leaves in the dark, (hardly known to the persons themselves,) than by the unexpected discoveries he makes of the real traits and circumstances in a character with which, till then, you find you were unacquainted. There is nothing at all heroic, however, in the style of any of his delineations. He never draws lofty characters or strong passions;—all his persons are of the ordinary stature as to intellect; and none of them trespass on the angelic nature, by elevation of fancy, or energy of purpose. Perhaps, after all, Parson Adams is his finest character. It is equally true to nature, and more ideal than any of the others. Its unsuspecting simplicity makes it not only more amiable, but doubly amusing, by gratifying the sense of superior sagacity in the reader. Our laughing at him does not once lessen our respect for him. His declaring that he

would willingly walk ten miles to fetch his sermon on vanity, merely to convince Wilson of his thorough contempt of this vice, and his consoling himself for the loss of his Æschylus, by suddenly recollecting that he could not read it if he had it, because it is dark, are among the finest touches of *naïveté*. The night-adventures at Lady Booby's with Beau Didapper, and the amiable Slipslop, are the most ludicrous; and that with the huntsman, who draws off the hounds from the poor Parson, because they would be spoiled by following *vermin*, the most profound. Fielding did not often repeat himself: but Dr. Harrison, in *Amelia*, may be considered as a variation of the character of Adams: so also is Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield; and the latter part of that work, which sets out so delightfully, an almost entire plagiarism from Wilson's account of himself, and Adams's domestic history.

Smollett's first novel, *Roderick Random*, which is also his best, appeared about the same time as Fielding's *Tom Jones*; and yet it has a much more modern air with it: But this may be accounted for, from the circumstance that Smollett was quite a young man at the time, whereas Fielding's manner must have been formed long before. The style of *Roderick Random*, though more scholastic and elaborate, is stronger and more pointed than that of *Tom Jones*; the incidents follow one another more rapidly, (though it must be confessed they never come in such a throng, or are brought out with the same dramatic facility); the humour is broader, and as effectual; and there is very nearly, if not quite, an equal interest excited by the story. What then is it that gives the superiority to Fielding? It is the superior insight into the springs of human character, and the constant development of that character through every change of circumstance. Smollett's humour often arises from the situation of the persons, or the peculiarity of their external appearance, as, from *Roderick Random*'s carrotty locks, which hung down over his shoulders like a pound of candles, or Strap's ignorance of London, and the blunders that follow from it. There is a tone of vulgarity about all his productions. The incidents frequently resemble detached anecdotes taken from a newspaper or magazine; and, like those in *Gil Blas*, might happen to a hundred other characters. He exhibits only the external accidents and reverses to which human life is liable — not 'the stuff' of which it is composed. He seldom probes to the quick, or penetrates beyond the surface of his characters: and therefore he leaves no stings in the minds of his readers, and in this respect is far less interesting than Fielding. His novels always enliven, and never tire us: we take them up with pleasure, and lay them down without any strong feeling of regret. We look on and laugh, as spectators of an amusing though inelegant scene, without closing in with the combatants, or being made parties in the event. We read *Roderick Random* as an entertaining story; for the particular accidents and modes of life which it describes, have ceased to exist: but we regard *Tom Jones* as a real history; because the author never stops short of those essential principles which lie at the bottom of all our actions, and in which we feel an immediate interest; — *intus et in cute*. — Smollett excels most as the lively caricaturist: Fielding as the exact painter and profound metaphysician. We are far from maintaining, that this account applies uniformly to the productions of these two writers; but we think that, as far as they essentially differ, what we have stated is the general distinction between them. *Roderick Random* is the purest of Smollett's novels; we mean

in point of style and description. Most of the incidents and characters are supposed to have been taken from the events of his own life; and are therefore truer to nature. There is a rude conception of generosity in some of his characters, of which Fielding seems to have been incapable; his amiable persons being merely good-natured. It is owing to this, we think, that Strap is superior to Partridge; and there is a heartiness and warmth of feeling in some of the scenes between Lieutenant Bowling and his nephew, which is beyond Fielding's power of impassioned writing. The whole of the scene on ship-board is a most admirable and striking picture, and, we imagine, very little, if at all, exaggerated, though the interest it excites is of a very unpleasant kind. The picture of the little profligate French friar, who was Roderick's travelling companion, and of whom he always kept to the windward, is one of Smollett's most masterly sketches. Peregrine Pickle is no great favourite of ours, and Launcelot Greaves was not worthy of the genius of the author.

Humphry Clinker and Count Fathom are both equally admirable in their way. Perhaps the former is the most pleasant gossiping novel that ever was written—that which gives the most pleasure with the least effort to the reader. It is quite as amusing as going the journey could have been, and we have just as good an idea of what happened on the road as if we had been of the party. Humphry Clinker himself is exquisite; and his sweetheart, Winifred Jenkins, nearly as good. Matthew Bramble, though not altogether original, is excellently supported, and seems to have been the prototype of Sir Anthony Absolute in the Rivals. But Lismahago is the flower of the flock. His tenaciousness in argument is not so delightful as the relaxation of his logical severity, when he finds his fortune mellowing with the wintry smiles of Mrs. Tabitha Bramble. This is the best preserved and most original of all Smollett's characters. The resemblance of Don Quixote is only just enough to make it interesting to the critical reader, without giving offence to any body else. The indecency and filth in this novel, are what must be allowed to all Smollett's writings. The subject and characters in Count Fathom are, in general, exceedingly disgusting; the story is also spun out to a degree of tediousness in the serious and sentimental parts; but there is more power of writing occasionally shown in it than in any of his works. We need only refer to the fine and bitter irony of the Count's address to the country of his ancestors on landing in England; to the robber-scene in the forest, which has never been surpassed; to the Parisian swindler, who personates a raw English country squire (Western is tame in the comparison); and to the story of the seduction in the west of England. We should have some difficulty to point out, in any author, passages written with more force and nature than these.

It is not, in our opinion, a very difficult attempt to class Fielding or Smollett:—the one as an observer of the characters of human life; the other as a describer of its various eccentricities. But it is by no means so easy to dispose of Richardson, who was neither an observer of the one, nor a describer of the other; but who seemed to spin his materials entirely out of his own brain, as if there had been nothing existing in the world beyond the little shop in which he sat writing. There is an artificial reality about his works, which is nowhere to be met with. They have the romantic air of a pure fiction, with the literal minuteness of a common diary. The author had the strangest matter-of-fact

imagination that ever existed, and wrote the oddest mixture of poetry and prose. He does not appear to have taken advantage of any thing in actual nature, from one end of his works to the other; and yet, throughout all his works, (voluminous as they are — and this, to be sure, is one reason why they are so,) he sets about describing every object and transaction, as if the whole had been given in on evidence by an eye-witness. This kind of high finishing from imagination is an anomaly in the history of human genius; and certainly nothing so fine was ever produced, by the same accumulation of minute parts. There is not the least distraction, the least forgetfulness of the end: every circumstance is made to tell. We cannot agree that this exactness of detail produces heaviness; on the contrary, it gives an appearance of truth, and a positive interest to the story; and we listen with the same attention as we should to the particulars of a confidential communication. We at one time used to think some parts of Sir Charles Grandison rather trifling and tedious, especially the long description of Miss Harriet Byron's wedding clothes, till we met with two young ladies who had severally copied out the whole of that very description for their own private gratification. After this, we could not blame the author.

The effect of reading this work, is like an increase of kindred: you find yourself all of a sudden introduced into the midst of a large family, with aunts and cousins to the third and fourth generation, and grandmothers both by the father's and mother's side, — and a very odd set of people too, but people whose real existence and personal identity you can no more dispute than your own senses, — for you see and hear all that they do or say. What is still more extraordinary, all this extreme elaborateness in working out the story, seems to have cost the author nothing; for it is said, that the published works are mere abridgments. We have heard (though this, we suppose, must be a pleasant exaggeration) that Sir Charles Grandison was originally written in eight and twenty volumes.

Pamela is the first of his productions, and the very child of his brain. Taking the general idea of the character of a modest and beautiful country girl, and of the situation in which she is placed, he makes out all the rest, even to the smallest circumstance, by the mere force of a reasoning imagination. It would seem as if a step lost would be as fatal here as in a mathematical demonstration. The development of the character is the most simple, and comes the nearest to nature that it can do, without being the same thing. The interest of the story increases with the dawn of understanding and reflection in the heroine. Her sentiments gradually expand themselves, like opening flowers. She writes better every time, and acquires a confidence in herself, just as a girl would do, writing such letters in such circumstances; and yet it is certain *that no girl would write such letters in such circumstances*. What we mean is this: Richardson's nature is always the nature of sentiment and reflection, not of impulse or situation. He furnishes his characters, on every occasion, with the presence of mind of the author. He makes them act, not as they would from the impulse of the moment, but as they might upon reflection, and upon a careful review of every motive and circumstance in their situation. They regularly sit down to write letters; and if the business of life consisted in letter-writing, and was carried on by the post, (like a Spanish game at chess,) human nature would be what Richardson represents it. All

actual objects and feelings are blunted and deadened by being presented through a medium which may be true to reason, but is false in nature. He confounds his own point of view with that of the immediate actors in the scene; and hence presents you with a conventional and factitious nature, instead of that which is real. Dr. Johnson seems to have preferred this truth of reflection to the truth of nature, when he said that there was more knowledge of the human heart in a page of Richardson than in all Fielding. Fielding, however, saw more of the practical results, and understood the principles as well; but he had not the same power of speculating upon their possible results, and combining them in certain ideal forms of passion and imagination, which was Richardson's real excellence.

It must be observed, however, that it is this mutual good understanding, and comparing of notes between the author and the persons he describes; his infinite circumspection; his exact process of ratiocination and calculation, which gives such an appearance of coldness and formality to most of his characters,—which makes prudes of his women, and coxcombs of his men. Every thing is too conscious in his works. Every thing is distinctly brought home to the mind of the actors in the scene, which is a fault undoubtedly; but then, it must be confessed, every thing is brought home in its full force to the mind of the reader also; and we feel the same interest in the story as if it were our own. Can any thing be more beautiful or affecting than Pamela's reproaches to her 'lumpish heart' when she is sent away from her master's at her own request—its lightness, when she is sent for back—the joy which the conviction of the sincerity of his love diffuses in her heart, like the coming-on of spring—the artifice of the stuff gown—the meeting with Lady Davers after her marriage—and the trial scene with her husband? Who ever remained insensible to the passion of Lady Clementina, except Sir Charles Grandison himself, who was the object of it? Clarissa is, however, his masterpiece, if we except Lovelace. If she is fine in herself, she is still finer in his account of her. With that foil, her purity is dazzling indeed; and she who could triumph by her virtue, and the force of her love, over the regality of Lovelace's mind, his wit, his person, his accomplishments and his spirit, conquers all hearts. We should suppose that never sympathy more deep or sincere was excited than by the heroine of Richardson's romance, except by the calamities of real life. The links in this wonderful chain of interest are not more finely wrought, than their whole weight is overwhelming and irresistible. Who can forget the exquisite gradations of her long dying scene, or the closing of the coffin-lid, when Miss Howe comes to take her last leave of her friend; or the heart-breaking reflection that Clarissa makes on what was to have been her wedding-day? Well does a modern writer exclaim—

‘ Books are a real world, both pure and good,
Round which, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness may grow!’

Richardson's wit was unlike that of any other writer;—his humour was so too. Both were the effect of intense activity of mind;—laboured, and yet completely effectual. We might refer to Lovelace's reception and description of Hickman, when he calls out Death in his ear, as the name of the person with whom Clarissa had fallen in love; and to the scene at the glove shop. What can be more magnificent

than his enumeration of his companions — ‘ Belton so pert and so pimply — Tourville so fair and so foppish,’ &c.? In casuistry, he is quite at home; and, with a boldness greater even than his puritanical severity, has exhausted every topic on virtue and vice. There is another peculiarity in Richardson, not perhaps so uncommon, which is, his systematically preferring his most insipid characters to his finest, though both were equally his own invention, and he must be supposed to have understood something of their qualities. Thus he preferred the little, selfish, affected, insignificant Miss Byron, to the divine Clementina; and again, Sir Charles Grandison, to the nobler Lovelace. We have nothing to say in favour of Lovelace’s morality; but Sir Charles is the prince of coxcombs, — whose eye was never once taken from his own person, and his own virtues; and there is nothing which excites so little sympathy as this excessive egotism.

It remains to speak of Sterne; — and we shall do it in few words. There is more of *mannerism* and affectation in him, and a more immediate reference to preceding authors; — but his excellences, where he is excellent, are of the first order. His characters are intellectual and inventive, like Richardson’s — but totally opposite in the execution. The one are made out by continuity, and patient repetition of touches; the others, by rapid and masterly strokes, and graceful apposition. His style is equally different from Richardson’s: — it is at times the most rapid, — the most happy, — the most idiomatic of any of our novel writers. It is the pure essence of English conversational style. His works consist only of *morceaux*, — of brilliant passages. His wit is poignant, though artificial; — and his characters (though the groundwork has been laid before) have yet invaluable original differences; — and the spirit of the execution, the master-strokes constantly thrown into them, are not to be surpassed. It is sufficient to name them — Yorick, Dr. Slop, Mr. Shandy, my Uncle Toby, Trim, Susanna, and the Widow Wadman: and in these he has contrived to oppose, with equal felicity and originality, two characters, — one of pure intellect, and the other of pure good-nature, in my Father and my Uncle Toby. There appears to have been in Sterne a vein of dry, sarcastic humour, and of extreme tenderness of feeling; — the latter sometimes carried to affectation, as in the tale of Maria, and the apostrophe to the recording angel; — but at other times pure, and without blemish. The story of Le Fevre is perhaps the finest in the English language. My Father’s restlessness, both of body and mind, is inimitable. It is the model from which all those despicable performances against modern philosophy ought to have been copied, if their authors had known any thing of the subject they were writing about. My Uncle Toby is one of the finest compliments ever paid to human nature. He is the most unoffending of God’s creatures; or, as the French express it — *un tel petit bon homme!* Of his bowling-green, — his sieges, — and his amours, who would say or think any thing amiss?

It is remarkable that our four best novel-writers belong nearly to the same age. We also owe to the same period (the reign of George II.) the inimitable Hogarth, and some of our best writers of the middle style of comedy. If we were called upon to account for this coincidence, we should wave the consideration of more general causes, (as, that imagination naturally descends with the progress of civilization,) and ascribe it at once to the establishment of the Protestant ascendancy, and the succession of the House of Hanover. These great events

appear to have given a more popular turn to our literature and genius, as well as to our Government. It was found high time that the people should be represented in books as well as in parliament. They wished to see some account of themselves in what they read, and not to be confined always to the vices, the miseries, and frivolities of the great. Our domestic tragedy, and our earliest periodical works, appeared a little before the same period. In despotic countries, human nature is not of sufficient importance to be studied or described. The *canaille* are objects rather of disgust than curiosity; and there are no middle classes. The works of Racine and Moliere are little else than imitations of the verbiage of the court, before which they were represented; or fanciful caricatures of the manners of the lowest of the people. But in the period of our history in question, a security of person and property, and a freedom of opinion, had been established, which made every man feel of some consequence to himself, and appear an object of some curiosity to his neighbours; our manners became more domesticated; there was a general spirit of sturdiness and independence, which made the English character more truly English than perhaps at any other period—that is, more tenacious of its own opinions and purposes. The whole surface of society appeared cut out into square enclosures and sharp angles, which extended to the dresses of the time, their gravel walks, and clipped hedges. Each individual had a certain ground-plot of his own to cultivate his particular humours in, and let them shoot out at pleasure; and a most plentiful crop they have produced accordingly.

The reign of George II. was, in a word, in an eminent degree, *the age of hobby-horses*. But since that period, things have taken a different turn. His present Majesty, during almost the whole of his reign, has been constantly mounted on a great War-horse; and has fairly driven all competitors out of the field. Instead of minding our own affairs, or laughing at each other, the eyes of all his faithful subjects have been fixed on the career of the Sovereign, and all hearts anxious for the safety of his person and government. Our pens and our swords have been drawn alike in their defence; and the returns of killed and wounded, the manufacture of newspapers and parliamentary speeches, have exceeded all former example. If we have had little of the blessings of peace, we have had enough of the glories and calamities of war. His Majesty has indeed contrived to keep alive the greatest public interest ever known, by his determined manner of riding his hobby for half a century together, with the aristocracy—the democracy—the clergy—the landed and monied interest—and the rabble, in full cry after him! and at the end of his career, most happily and unexpectedly succeeded—amidst empires lost and won—kingdoms overturned and created—and the destruction of an incredible number of lives—in restoring *the divine right of Kings*,—and thus preventing any future abuse of the example which seated his family on the throne!

It is not to be wondered, if, amidst the tumult of events crowded into this period, our literature has partaken of the disorder of the time; if our prose has run mad, and our poetry grown childish. Among those few persons who 'have kept the even tenor of their way,' the author of *Evelina*, *Cecilia*, and *Camilla*, holds a distinguished place. Mrs. Radcliffe's 'enchantments drear' and mouldering castles, derived a part of their interest, we suppose, from the supposed tottering state

of all old structures at the time; and Mrs. Inchbald's 'Nature and Art' would not have had the same popularity, but that it fell in (in its two main characters) with the prevailing prejudice of the moment, that judges and bishops were not pure abstractions of justice and piety. Miss Edgeworth's tales, again, are a kind of essence of common sense, which seemed to be called for by the prevailing epidemics of audacious paradox and insane philosophy. The author of the present novel is, however, quite of the old school, a mere common observer of manners,—and also a very woman. It is this last circumstance which forms the peculiarity of her writings, and distinguishes them from those masterpieces which we have before mentioned. She is unquestionably a quick, lively, and accurate observer of persons and things; but she always looks at them with a consciousness of her sex, and in that point of view in which it is the particular business and interest of women to observe them. We thus get a kind of supplement and gloss to our original text, which we could not otherwise have obtained. There is little in her works of passion or character, or even manners, in the most extended sense of the word, as implying the sum-total of our habits and pursuits; her *forte* is in describing the absurdities and affectations of external behaviour, or *the manners of people in company*. Her characters, which are all caricatures, are no doubt distinctly marked, and perfectly kept up; but they are somewhat superficial, and exceedingly uniform. Her heroes and heroines, almost all of them, depend on the stock of a single phrase or sentiment; or at least have certain mottoes or devices by which they may always be known. They are such characters as people might be supposed to assume for a night at a masquerade. She presents not the whole length figure, nor even the face, but some prominent feature. In the present novel, for example, a lady appears regularly every ten pages, to get a lesson in music for nothing. She never appears for any other purpose; this is all you know of her; and in this the whole wit and humour of the character consists. Meadows is the same, who has always the same cue of being tired, without any other idea, &c. It has been said of Shakespeare, that you may always assign his speeches to the proper characters:—and you may infallibly do the same thing with Madame D'Arblay's; for they always say the same thing. The Branghtons are the best. Mr. Smith is an exquisite city portrait. Evelina is also her best novel, because it is shortest; that is, it has all the liveliness in the sketches of character, and exquisiteness of comic dialogue and repartee, without the tediousness of the story, and endless affectation of the sentiments.

Women, in general, have a quicker perception of any oddity or singularity of character than men, and are more alive to every absurdity which arises from a violation of the rules of society, or a deviation from established custom. This partly arises from the restraints on their own behaviour, which turn their attention constantly on the subject, and partly from other causes. The surface of their minds, like that of their bodies, seems of a finer texture than ours; more soft, and susceptible of immediate impression. They have less muscular power,—less power of continued voluntary attention,—of reason—passion and imagination; but they are more easily impressed with whatever appeals to their senses or habitual prejudices. The intuitive perception of their minds is less disturbed by any general reasonings on causes or consequences. They learn the idiom of character and manner, as they acquire that of language, by rote merely, without troubling themselves

about the principles. Their observation is not the less accurate on that account, as far as it goes ; for it has been well said, that ‘ there is nothing so true as habit.’

There is little other power in Miss Burney’s novels, than that of immediate observation. Her characters, whether of refinement or vulgarity, are equally superficial and confined. The whole is a question of form, whether that form is adhered to, or violated. It is this circumstance which takes away dignity and interest from her story and sentiments, and makes the one so teasing and tedious, and the other so insipid. The difficulties in which she involves her heroines are indeed ‘ Female Difficulties ;’ — they are difficulties created out of nothing. The author appears to have no other idea of refinement than that it is the reverse of vulgarity ; but the reverse of vulgarity is fastidiousness and affectation. There is a true and a false delicacy. Because a vulgar country Miss would answer ‘ yes’ to a proposal of marriage in the first page, Madame d’Arblay makes it a proof of an excess of refinement, and an indispensable point of etiquette in her young ladies, to postpone the answer to the end of five volumes, without the smallest reason for their doing so, and with every reason to the contrary. The reader is led every moment to expect a denouement, and is as constantly disappointed on some trifling pretext. The whole artifice of her fable consists in coming to no conclusion. Her ladies stand so upon the order of their going, that they do not go at all. They will not abate an ace of their punctilio in any circumstances, or on any emergency. They would consider it as quite indecorous to run down stairs though the house were in flames, or to move off the pavement though a scaffolding was falling. She has formed to herself an abstract idea of perfection in common behaviour, which is quite as romantic and impracticable as any other idea of the sort ; and the consequence has naturally been, that she makes her heroines commit the greatest improprieties and absurdities, in order to avoid the smallest. In contradiction to a maxim in philosophy, they constantly act from the weakest motive, or rather from pure affectation.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.*

WE have often been astonished at the quantity of talent — of invention, observation, and knowledge of character, as well as of spirited and graceful composition, that may be found in those works of fiction in our language, which are generally regarded as among the lower productions of our literature, — upon which no great pains is understood to be bestowed, and which are seldom regarded as the titles of a permanent reputation. If Novels, however, are not fated to last as long as Epic poems, they are at least a great deal more popular in their season ; and, slight as their structure, and imperfect as their finishing may often be thought in comparison, we have no hesitation in saying, that the better specimens of the art are incomparably more entertaining, and considerably more instructive. The great objection to them, indeed,

* Tales of My Landlord. — Vol. xxviii. page 193. March, 1817.

is, that they are too entertaining — and are so pleasant in the reading, as to be apt to produce a disrelish for other kinds of reading which may be more necessary, and can in no way be made so agreeable. Neither science, nor authentic history, nor political nor professional instruction, can be conveyed in a pleasant tale; and, therefore, all these things are in danger of appearing dull and uninteresting to the votaries of those more seductive studies. Among the most popular of these popular productions that have appeared in our times, we must rank the works to which we have just alluded; and we do not hesitate to say, that they are well entitled to that distinction. They are, indeed, in many respects, very extraordinary performances — though in nothing more extraordinary than in having remained so long unclaimed. There is no name, we think, in our literature, to which they would not add lustre — and lustre, too, of a very enviable kind; for they not only show great talent, but infinite good sense and good-nature, — a more vigorous and wide reaching intellect than is often displayed in novels, and a more powerful fancy, and a deeper sympathy with various passion, than is often combined with strength of understanding.

The author, whoever he is, has a truly graphic and creative power in the invention and delineation of characters — which he sketches with an ease, and colours with a brilliancy, and scatters about with a profusion, which reminds us of Shakespeare himself: yet with all this force and felicity in the representation of living agents, he has the eye of a poet for all the striking aspects of nature; and usually contrives, both in his scenery, and in the groups with which it is enlivened, to combine the picturesque with the natural, with a grace that has rarely been attained by artists so copious and rapid. His narrative, in this way, is kept constantly full of life, variety, and colour; and is so interspersed with glowing descriptions, and lively allusions, and flying traits of sagacity and pathos, as not only to keep our attention continually awake, but to afford a pleasing exercise to most of our other faculties. The prevailing tone is very gay and pleasant; but the author's most remarkable, and, perhaps, his most delightful talent, is that of representing kindness of heart in union with lightness of spirits and great simplicity of character, and of blending the expression of warm and generous and exalted affections with scenes and persons that are in themselves both lowly and ludicrous. This gift he shares with his illustrious countryman Burns — as he does many of the other qualities we have mentioned with another living poet, — who is only inferior perhaps in that to which we have alluded. It is very honourable, indeed, we think, both to the author, and to the readers among whom he is so extremely popular, that the great interest of his pieces is for the most part a moral interest — that the concern we take in his characters is less on account of their adventures than of their amiableness — and that the great charm of his works is derived from the kindness of heart, the capacity of generous emotions, and the lights of native taste which he ascribes, so lavishly, and at the same time with such an air of truth and familiarity, even to the humblest of his favourites. With all his relish for the ridiculous, accordingly, there is no tone of misanthropy, or even of sarcasm, in his representations; but, on the contrary, a great indulgence and relenting towards those who are to be the objects of our disapprobation. There is no keen or cold-blooded satire — no bitterness of heart, or fierceness of resentment, in any part of his writings. His love of ridicule is little else than a love of mirth;

and savours throughout of the joyous temperament in which it appears to have its origin; while the buoyancy of a raised and poetical imagination lifts him continually above the region of mere jollity and good humour, to which a taste, by no means nice or fastidious, seems constantly in danger of sinking him. He is evidently a person of a very sociable and liberal spirit — with great habits of observation — who has ranged pretty extensively through the varieties of human life and character, and mingled with them all, not only with intelligent familiarity, but with a free and natural sympathy for all the diversity of their tastes, pleasures, and pursuits — one who has kept his heart as well as his eyes open to all that has offered itself to engage them; and learned indulgence for human faults and follies, not only from finding kindred faults in their most intolerant censors, but also for the sake of the virtues by which they are often redeemed, and the sufferings by which they have still oftener been taught. The temper of his writings, in short, is precisely the reverse of those of our Laureates and Lakers, who, being themselves the most whimsical of mortals, make it a conscience to loathe and detest all with whom they happen to disagree, and labour to promote mutual animosity and all manner of uncharitableness among mankind, by referring every supposed error of taste, or peculiarity of opinion, to some hateful corruption of the heart and understanding.

With all the indulgence, however, which we so justly ascribe to him, we are far from complaining of the writer before us for being too neutral and undecided on the great subjects which are most apt to engender excessive zeal and intolerance — and we are almost as far from agreeing with him as to most of these subjects. In politics, it is sufficiently manifest, that he is a decided Tory — and, we are afraid, something of a latitudinarian both in morals and religion: he is very apt, at least, to make a mock of all enthusiasm for liberty or faith — and not only gives a decided preference to the social over the austere virtues — but seldom expresses any warm or hearty admiration except for those graceful and gentleman-like principles which can generally be acted upon with a gay countenance, and do not imply any great effort of self-denial, or any deep sense of the rights of others, or the helplessness and humility of our common nature. Unless we misconstrue very grossly the indications in these volumes, the author thinks no times so happy as those in which an indulgent monarch awards a reasonable portion of liberty to grateful subjects, who do not call in question his right either to give or to withhold it — in which a dignified and decent hierarchy receives the homage of their submissive and uninquiring flocks — and a gallant nobility redeems the venial immoralities of their gayer hours, by brave and honourable conduct towards each other, and spontaneous kindness to vassals in whom they recognise no independent rights, and not many features of a common nature. It is rather remarkable, however, that, with propensities thus decidedly aristocratical, the ingenious author has succeeded by far the best in the representation of rustic and homely characters; — and not in the ludicrous or contemptuous representation of them — but by making them at once more natural and more interesting than they had ever been made before in any work of fiction; by showing them not as clowns to be laughed at — or wretches to be pitied and despised — but as human creatures, with as many pleasures, and fewer cares than their superiors — with affections not only as strong, but often as delicate as those whose language is smoother — and with a vein of humour, a

force of sagacity, and very frequently an elevation of fancy, as high and as natural as can be met with among more cultivated beings. The great merit of all these delineations is their admirable truth and fidelity — the whole manner and cast of the characters being accurately moulded on their condition — and the finer attributes that are ascribed to them, so blended and harmonized with the native rudeness and simplicity of their life and occupations, that they are made interesting and even noble beings, without the least particle of foppery or exaggeration, and delight and amuse us, without trespassing at all on the province of pastoral or romance.

Next to these, we think, he has found his happiest subjects, or at least displayed his greatest powers, in the delineation of the grand and gloomy aspects of nature, and of the dark and fierce passions of the heart. The natural gayety of his temper does not indeed allow him to dwell long on such themes; — but the sketches he occasionally introduces are executed with admirable force and spirit — and give a strong impression both of the vigour of his imagination, and the variety of his talent. It is only in the third rank that we would place his pictures of chivalry and chivalrous character — his traits of gallantry, nobleness, and honour — and that bewitching assemblage of gay and gentle manners, with generosity, candour, and courage, which has long been familiar enough to readers and writers of novels, but has never before been represented with such an air of truth, and so much ease and happiness of execution.

Among his faults and failures, we must give the first place to his descriptions of virtuous young ladies — and his representations of the ordinary business of courtship and conversation in polished life. We admit that those things, as they are commonly conducted, are apt to be a little insipid to a mere critical spectator; — and that while they consequently require more heightening than strange adventures or grotesque persons, they admit less of exaggeration or ambitious ornament; yet we cannot think it necessary that they should be altogether so lame and mawkish as we generally find them in the hands of this spirited writer, whose powers really seem to require some stronger stimulus to bring them into action, than can be supplied by the flat realities of a peaceful and ordinary existence. His love of the ludicrous, it must also be observed, often betrays him into forced and vulgar exaggerations, and into the repetition of common and paltry stories; though it is but fair to add, that he does not detain us long with them, and makes amends by the copiousness of his assortment, for the indifferent quality of some of the specimens. It is another consequence of this extreme abundance in which he revels and riots, and of the fertility of the imagination from which it is supplied, that he is at all times a little apt to overdo even those things which he does best. His most striking and highly coloured characters appear rather too often, and go on rather too long. It is astonishing, indeed, with what spirit they are supported, and how fresh and animated they are to the very last; — but still there is something too much of them — and they would be more waited for and welcomed, if they were not quite so lavish of their presence. It was reserved for Shakespeare alone, to leave all his characters as new and unworn as he found them, — and to carry Falstaff through the business of three several plays, and leave us as greedy of his sayings as at the moment of his first introduction. It is no light praise to the author before us, that he

has sometimes reminded us of this as well as other inimitable excellences in that most gifted of all inventors.

To complete this hasty and unpremeditated sketch of his general characteristics, we must add, that he is above all things national and Scottish,—and never seems to feel the powers of a giant, except when he touches his native soil. His countrymen alone, therefore, can have a full sense of his merits, or a perfect relish of his excellences; and those only, indeed, of them, who have mingled, as he has done, pretty freely with the lower orders, and made themselves familiar, not only with their language, but with the habits and traits of character, of which it then only becomes expressive. It is one thing to understand the meaning of words, as they are explained by other words in a glossary or dictionary, and another to know their value, as expressive of certain feelings and humours in the speakers to whom they are native, and as signs both of temper and condition among those who are familiar with their import.

We must content ourselves, we fear, with this hasty and superficial sketch of the general character of this author's performances, in the place of a more detailed examination of those which he has given to the public since we first announced him as the author of *Waverley*. The time for noticing his two intermediate works has been permitted to go by so far, that it would probably be difficult to recal the public attention to them with any effect; and, at all events, impossible to affect, by any observations of ours, the judgment which has been passed upon them, with very little assistance, we must say, from professed critics, by the mass of their intelligent readers,—to whom, indeed, we have no doubt that they are, by this time, as well known, and as correctly estimated, as if they had been indebted to us for their first impressions on the subject. For our own parts we must confess, that we still look back to *Waverley* with all the fascination of a first love; and that we cannot help thinking, that the greatness of the public transactions in which that story was involved, as well as the wildness and picturesque graces of its Highland scenery and characters, have invested it with a charm, to which the more familiar attractions of the other pieces have not come up. In this, perhaps, our opinion differs from that of better judges;—but we cannot help suspecting, that the later publications are most admired by many, at least in the Southern part of the island, only because they are more easily and perfectly understood, in consequence of the training which had been gone through in the perusal of the former. But, however that be, we are far enough from denying, that the two succeeding works are performances of extraordinary merit,—and are willing even to admit, that they show quite as much power and genius in the author—though, to our taste at least, the subjects are less happily selected. *Dandie Dinmont* is, beyond all question, we think, the best rustic portrait that has ever yet been exhibited to the public—the most honourable to rustics, and the most creditable to the heart as well as the genius of the artist—the truest to nature—the most interesting and the most complete in all its lineaments. *Meg Merrilees* belongs more to the department of poetry: she is most akin to the witches of *Macbeth*, with some traits of the antient Sybil engrafted on the coarser stock of a Gipsy of the last century. Though not absolutely in nature, however, she must be allowed to be a very imposing and emphatic personage, and to be mingled, both with the business and the scenery of the piece, with

the greatest skill and effect. Pleydell is a harsh caricature; and Dirk Hatteric a vulgar bandit of the German school. The lovers, too, are rather more faultless and more insipid than usual; and all the genteel persons, indeed, not a little fatiguing. Yet there are many passages of great merit, of a gentler and less obtrusive character. The grief of old Ellengowan for the loss of his child, and the picture of his own dotage and death, are very touching and natural; while the many descriptions of the coast scenery, and of the various localities of the story, are given with a freedom, force, and effect, that bring every feature before our eyes, and impress us with an irresistible conviction of their reality.

The Antiquary is, perhaps, on the whole, less interesting,—though there are touches in it, equal, if not superior, to any thing that occurs in either of the other works. The adventure of the tide and night storm under the cliffs, we do not hesitate to pronounce the very best description we ever met with,—in verse or in prose, in antient or in modern writing. Old Edie is of the family of Meg Merrilees,—a younger brother, we confess, with less terror and energy, and more taste and gayety, but equally a poetical embellishment of a familiar character; and yet resting enough on the great points of nature, to be blended without extravagance in the transactions of beings so perfectly natural and thoroughly alive, that no suspicion can be entertained of their reality. The Antiquary himself is the great blemish of the work,—at least in so far as he is an Antiquary;—though we must say for him, that, unlike most oddities, he wearies us most at first; and is so managed, as to turn out both more interesting and more amusing than we had any reason to expect. The low characters in this book are not always worth drawing; but they are exquisitely finished; and prove the extent and accuracy of the author's acquaintance with human life and human nature. The family of the fisherman is an exquisite groupe throughout; and, at the scene of the funeral, in the highest degree striking and pathetic. Dousterswivel is as wearisome as the genuine Spurzheim himself: and the tragic story of the Lord is, on the whole, a miscarriage, though interspersed with passages of great force and energy. The denouement which connects it with the active hero of the piece, is altogether forced and unnatural.

The Tales of My Landlord, though they fill four volumes, are, as yet, but two in number; the one being three times as long and ten times as interesting as the other. The introduction, from which the general title is derived, is as foolish and clumsy as may be; and is another instance of that occasional imbecility or self-willed caprice which every now and then leads this author, before he gets afloat on the full stream of his narration, into absurdities which excite the astonishment of the least gifted of his readers. This whole prologue of My Landlord, which is vulgar in the conception, trite and lame in the execution, and utterly out of harmony with the stories to which it is prefixed, should be entirely retrenched in the future editions; and the two novels, which have as little connexion with each other as with this ill-fancied prelude, given separately to the world, each under its own denomination.

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The scene of the story is laid—in Scotland of course—in those disastrous times which immediately preceded the Revolution 1688; and exhibits a lively picture, both of the general state of manners at that period, and of the conduct and temper and principles of the two great

parties in politics and religion that were then engaged in unequal and rancorous hostility. There are no times certainly, within the reach of authentic history, on which it is more painful to look back—which show a government more base and tyrannical, or a people more helpless and miserable. And though all pictures of the greater passions are full of interest, and a lively representation of strong and enthusiastic emotions never fails to be deeply attractive, the piece would have been too full of distress and humiliation if it had been chiefly engaged with the course of public events, or the record of public feelings. So sad a subject would not have suited many readers, and the author, we suspect, less than any of them. Accordingly, in this, as in his other works, he has made use of the historical events which came in his way, rather to develop the characters, and bring out the peculiarities of the individuals whose adventures he relates, than for any purpose of political information; and makes us present to the times in which he has placed them, less by his direct notices of the great transactions by which they were distinguished, than by his casual intimations of their effects on private persons, and by the very contrast which their temper and occupations often appear to furnish to the colour of the national story. Nothing, indeed, in this respect is more delusive, or at least more woefully imperfect, than the suggestions of authentic history, as it is generally, or rather universally written; and nothing more exaggerated than the impressions it conveys of the actual state and condition of those who live in its most agitated periods. The great public events of which alone it takes cognisance have but little direct influence upon the body of the people, and do not, in general, form the principal business, or happiness or misery even of those who are in some measure concerned in them. Even in the worst and most disastrous times, in periods of civil war and revolution, and public discord and oppression, a great part of the time of a great part of the people is spent in making love and money—in social amusement or professional industry—in schemes for worldly advancement or personal distinction, just as in periods of general peace and prosperity. Men court and marry very nearly as much in the one season as in the other; and are as merry at weddings and christenings—as gallant at balls and races—as busy in their studies and counting-houses—eat as heartily, in short, and sleep as sound—prattle with their children as pleasantly—and thin their plantations and scold their servants as zealously, as if their contemporaries were not furnishing materials thus abundantly for the tragic muse of history. The quiet under current of life, in short, keeps its deep and steady course in its eternal channels, unaffected, or but slightly disturbed, by the storms that agitate its surface; and while long tracts of time, in the history of every country, seem, to the distant student of its annals, to be darkened over with one thick and oppressive cloud of unbroken misery, the greater part of those who have lived through the whole acts of the tragedy will be found to have enjoyed a fair average share of felicity, and to have been much less affected by the shocking events of their day, than those who know nothing else of it than that such events took place in its course. Few men, in short, are historical characters—and no man is always, or most usually, performing a public part. The actual happiness of every life depends far more on things that regard it exclusively, than on those political occurrences which are the common concern of society; and

though nothing lends such an air, both of reality and importance, to a fictitious narrative, as to connect its persons with events in real history, still it is the imaginary individual himself that excites our chief interest throughout, and we care for the national affairs only in so far as they affect him. In one sense, indeed, this is the true end and the best use of history; for as all public events are important only as they ultimately concern individuals, if the individual selected belong to a large and comprehensive class, and the events, and their natural operation on him, be justly represented, we shall be enabled, in following out his adventures, to form no bad estimate of their true character and value.

The author before us has done all this, we think, and with admirable talent and effect; and if he has not been quite impartial in the management of his historical persons, has contrived, at any rate, to make them contribute largely to the interest of his acknowledged inventions. His view of the effects of great political contentions on private happiness, is, however, we have no doubt, substantially true; and that chiefly because it is not exaggerated — because he does not confine himself to show how gentle natures may be roused into heroism, or rougher tempers exasperated into rancour, by oppression, — but turns still more willingly to show with what ludicrous absurdity genuine enthusiasm may be debased, how little the gayety of the lighthearted and thoughtless may be impaired by the spectacle of public calamity, and how, in the midst of national distraction, selfishness will pursue its little game of quiet and cunning speculation, and gentler affections find time to multiply and to meet. It is this, we think, that constitutes the great merit of the work before us. It contains an admirable picture of manners and of characters; and exhibits, we think, with great truth and discrimination, the extent and the variety of the shades which the stormy aspect of the political horizon would be likely to throw on such objects.

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It is a production, undoubtedly, of great talent and originality; and yet we find the rudiments of almost all its characters in the very first of the author's publications. Morton is but another edition of Waverley, taking a bloody part in political contention, without caring much about the cause, and interchanging high offices of generosity with his political opponents. Claverhouse has many of the features of the gallant Fergus. Cuddie Headrigg is a Dandie Dinmont of a lower species; and even the Covenanters and their leaders were shadowed out, though afar off, in the gifted Gilfillan, and mine host of the Candlestick. It is in the picture of these hapless enthusiasts, undoubtedly, that the great merit and the great interest of the work consists. That interest, indeed, is so great, that we perceive it has even given rise to a sort of controversy among the admirers and contemners of those antient worthies. It is a singular honour, no doubt, to a work of fiction and amusement, to be thus made the theme of serious attack and defence upon points of historical and theological discussion, and to have grave dissertations written by learned contemporaries upon the accuracy of its representations of public events and characters, or the moral effects of the style of ridicule in which it indulges. It is difficult for us, we confess, to view the matter in so serious a light; nor do we feel much disposed, even if we had leisure for the task, to venture ourselves into the array of the disputants. One word or two, however,

we shall say, before concluding, upon the two great points of difference. First, as to the author's profanity in making scriptural expressions ridiculous, by the misuse of them he has ascribed to the fanatics; and, secondly, as to the fairness of his general representation of the conduct and character of the insurgent party and their opponents.

As to the first, we do not know very well what to say. Undoubtedly, all jocular use of Scripture phraseology is in some measure indecent and profane: yet we do not know in what other way those hypocritical pretences to extraordinary sanctity, which generally disguise themselves in such a garb, can be so effectually exposed. And even where the ludicrous misapplication of holy writ arises from mere ignorance, or the foolish mimicry of more learned discourses, as it is impossible to avoid smiling at the folly when it actually occurs, it is difficult for witty and humorous writers, in whose way it lies, to resist fabricating it for the purpose of exciting smiles. In so far as practice can afford any justification of such a proceeding, we conceive that its justification would be easy. In all our jest-books and plays and works of humour for two centuries back, the character of Quakers and Puritans and Methodists have been constantly introduced as fit objects of ridicule, on this very account. Swift is full of jokes of this description; and the pious and correct Addison himself is not a little fond of a witty application of a text from the sacred writings. When an author, whose aim was amusement, had to do with a set of people, all of whom dealt in familiar applications of Bible phrases and Old Testament adventures, and who, undoubtedly, very often made very absurd and ridiculous applications of them, it would be rather hard, we think, to interdict him entirely from the representation of these absurdities, or to put in force, for him alone, those statutes against profaneness, which other people have been allowed to transgress, in their hours of gayety, without censure or punishment.

On the other point, also, we rather lean to the side of the author. He is a Tory, we think, pretty plainly in principle, and scarcely disguises his preference for a Cavalier over a Puritan: but, with these propensities, we think he has dealt pretty fairly with both sides, especially when it is considered that, though he lays his scene in a known crisis of his national history, his work is professedly a work of fiction, and cannot well be accused of misleading any one as to matters of fact. He might have made Claverhouse victorious at Drumclog, if he had thought fit—and nobody could have found fault with him. The insurgent Presbyterians of 1666, and the subsequent years, were, beyond all question, a pious, brave, and conscientious race of men—to whom, and to whose efforts and sufferings, their descendants are deeply indebted for the liberty, both civil and religious, which they enjoy, as well as for the spirit of resistance to tyranny, which, we trust, they have inherited along with them. Considered generally as a party, it is impossible that they should ever be remembered, at least in Scotland, but with gratitude and veneration—that their sufferings should ever be mentioned but with deep resentment and horror—or their heroism, both active and passive, but with pride and exultation. At the same time, it is impossible to deny, that there were among them many absurd and ridiculous persons—and some of a savage and ferocious character—old women, in short, like Mause Headrigg—preachers like Kettledrummy—or desperadoes like Balfour of Burley. That a Tory novelist should bring such characters prominently for-

ward, in a tale of the times, appears to us not only to be quite natural, but really to be less blameable than almost any other way in which party feelings could be shown. But, even he, has not represented the bulk of the party as falling under this description, or as fairly represented by such personages. He has made his hero — who of course possesses all possible virtues — of that persuasion; and has allowed them, in general, the courage of martyrs, the self-denial of hermits, and the zeal and sincerity of apostles. His representation is almost avowedly that of one who is not of their communion; and yet we think it impossible to peruse it, without feeling the greatest respect and pity for those to whom it is applied. A zealous Presbyterian might no doubt have said more in their favour, without violating, or even concealing, the truth; but, while zealous Presbyterians will not write entertaining novels themselves, they cannot expect to be treated in them with the same favour as if that had been the character of their authors.

With regard to the author's picture of their opponents, we must say that, with the exception of Claverhouse himself, whom he has invested gratuitously with many graces and liberalities to which we are persuaded he has no title, and for whom, indeed, he has a foolish fondness, with which it would be absurd to deal seriously — he has shown no signs of a partiality that can be blamed, nor exhibited many traits in them with which their enemies have reason to quarrel. If any person can read his strong and lively pictures of military insolence and oppression, without feeling his blood boil within him, we must conclude the fault to be in his own apathy, and not in any softenings of the partial author: nor do we know any Whig writer who has exhibited the baseness and cruelty of that wretched government in more naked and revolting deformity, than in his scene of the torture at the Privy Council. The military executions of Claverhouse himself are admitted without palliation; and the bloodthirstiness of Dalzell, and the brutality of Lauderdale, are represented in their true colours. In short, if this author has been somewhat severe upon the Covenanters, neither has he spared their oppressors; and the truth probably is, that, never dreaming of being made responsible for historical accuracy or fairness in a composition of this description, he has exaggerated a little on both sides, for the sake of effect — and been carried, by the bent of his humour, most frequently to exaggerate on that which afforded the greatest scope for ridicule.*

* Since the publication of the *Fortunes of Nigel* no notice of Sir Walter Scott's Novels has appeared in the Edinburgh Review. See Vol. xxiv. page 208. Vol. xxix. page 403. Vol. xxxiii. page 1. Vol. xxxvii. page 204. The tales of Galt, Wilson, and Lockhart are reviewed in Vol. xxxix. page 158.

BOCCACCIO.*

IN tracing the progress by which the art of fictitious narrative has advanced from its rude origin to its perfection, we are struck, amidst all the diversities occasioned by government, climate, and education, with the singular coincidence of certain phenomena attending its different stages, which have given a kind of uniformity to its history in all ages and countries of the world.

The infancy of fiction, for example, is every where characterized by a superabundance of incident. Attention is kept awake by rapidity of succession; and the beauty or propriety of individual occurrences, or their relation to each other, is forgotten in the bustle and excitement produced by the train. If there exist a principle of selection at all, it seems to be in favour of what is most wild and improbable. Every thing is viewed by the Novelist through a veil of mystery, for so the face of nature was actually regarded by those to whom he addresses himself. Ignorant of the laws that regulate the course of the material world, and by which he is afterwards enabled almost to control its movements, man at first regards himself as an inferior being in the chain of existences by which he believes himself surrounded. He humbles himself before the objects of his terror; he endows the elements with will and intelligence; peoples the rocks, mountains, and streams with imaginary beings, to whom he ascribes powers surpassing his own, and, like Tancred in the Enchanted Forest, sees a nymph or a spirit issuing from every tree. The narrator, with an 'untaught innate philosophy,' avails himself of these feelings; and trusting little to the delineation of familiar occurrences, endeavours to excite and sustain attention by touching the master-key of mysterious terror;—by the tales of mythology, the legends of superstition, the detail of those strange phenomena which at times disturb the course of nature, or of those dark and fearful moral calamities which, suppressing the common powers of thought and action, seem to render man a helpless instrument in the hands of an overpowering and irresistible destiny.

As society advances, however, this mode of interesting passes away. Feeling emerges with the increase of intelligence, as warmth follows the dawn. The mind, 'touched to finer issues,' is acted on by gentler stimuli. The tales which formerly fettered the reason, are now addressed only to the imagination, and gradually sink into nursery legends. The influence of female society appears more visible, in the less revolting character of the *materiel* of fiction, and in the increasing tendency to the representation of the affairs of actual and domestic life, to which it has communicated so many varied aspects and new attractions. The aim of merely exciting attention by a multitude of incidents, is exchanged for that of touching the feelings, which is found to be more effectually accomplished by a few. The novelist abandons the character of a chronicler or annalist;—he exercises a principle of selection, passes over or details events according to their importance, and their relation to the end he has in view; and in supplying his

* The Italian Novelists, selected from the most approved Authors in that Language, from the earliest period down to the close of the eighteenth century, arranged in an Historical and Chronological Series. Translated from the Original Italian, accompanied with Notes, Critical and Biographical. By Thomas Roscoe. 4 vols. 8vo. London, 1825.—Vol. xlii. page 173. April 1825.

imaginary actors with motives, language, and sentiments suited to the scenes in which they are placed, he invents and delineates *character*.

There is still another stage in the progress of fiction. When knowledge and intelligence have been diffused over the whole surface of society ; when life becomes daily more uniform, decorous, and conventional,—less subject to strange interruptions—less animated by enthusiasm ; when men, amply furnished with materials for contemplation, and little solicited by external objects that lead to emotion, desire rather the repose of thought than the stir of action or of feeling ; and, in the representation of the things of life, are occupied more with the springs and motives, the hopes or fears which lead to action, than with action itself ; then a corresponding character is impressed on fictitious writing. Plots become simple and domestic to excess ; the place of incident is supplied by wit, by sentiment, by eloquence, by argument, by metaphysical analysis ; and novels, no longer intended merely to amuse, are made the vehicle of communicating dogmata, moral, political, religious, or philosophical, as the author's peculiar vein may incline.

Of course these several stages of fiction do not really stand quite separate and apart. Each rises out of its predecessor, and subsides into the next by degrees ; by the gradual dimness and disappearance of some features, the gradual increase and clearness of others : but still, through all the phases which it exhibits, the progress seems to be from the marvellous to the extreme of simplicity, and from a profusion to a penury of incident.

The vast mass of novels which Mr. Roscoe has opened up to the English reader, by these interesting specimens, seems to connect the two first periods, and to have originated in that peculiar state of society in Italy, when knowledge had dispelled, in some degree, among the higher classes, the rude ignorance which is the parent of superstitious wonder, but while all the wild and fierce passions of a barbarous age were still abroad, filling Italy with blood and crime, and habituating its inhabitants to scenes of horror and licentiousness. Even in the earliest of the Italian novels, the supernatural machinery which characterizes the rudest efforts of fiction has disappeared. We perceive traces of a national mind which has already made some progress in knowledge, but none in social refinement—which has escaped from the trammels and terrors of superstition, but is still struggling with that coarseness of feeling and rudeness of taste, which has been induced by centuries of feudal warfare yet unextinguished. We meet with something of the old leaven of a darker era, in the atrocious and revolting character of many of the incidents, the apparent want of confidence in the delineation of gentler feelings, the coarseness of all that is meant for humour, the absence of character, and the principle of resting the interest and effect of the tale, rather on a number of incidents slightly touched, than on a few more strongly drawn and more richly and carefully coloured.

And singular as it may at first appear, this character, which distinguishes the earlier of the Italian *novelle*, is applicable, with little variation, to the whole series, from Boccaccio down to Gozzi and Gironi ; the changes which might have been expected in the course of five centuries having, in fact, been arrested, partly by the stationary and unchanging nature of the national character, but still more by the peculiar views with which most of the imitators of Boccaccio (and what Italian novelist is not confessedly so ?) appear to have written. Boccaccio, by creating and fixing the prose style of his country, had

consecrated even the defects of the Decameron, and for ever given the tone to the Italian novel. Thenceforward he stood, as it were, between nature and his literary posterity; intercepting by his gigantic form the light which she shed, and attracting all eyes to himself as the source of inspiration. The tales of his imitators, too, seem all to be composed, less with the view of exciting interest by the narratives themselves, which they borrowed or imitated without ceremony, than in the hope of emulating or surpassing that Tuscan elegance of style, in which he had embalmed so many trifling and worthless legends. The incidents they really seem to have regarded merely as the vehicles of fine writing—as slight themes which were to be adorned with all the brilliant variations of which the music of Italian speech was susceptible. Of what consequence was it to an Italian that his tales were indecent, provided his Tuscan was pure?—that his incidents were borrowed, provided he was master of those flowers of Florentine low life which delighted the classic ears of the Della Crusca Academy?—that his novels were dull and foolish, provided they were told in the most approved language of the ‘*Conciosiacosache*’ school? The glory they aspired to, in fact, was that of writing elegantly,—not that of writing to the imagination or the heart. And this, while it explains that stationary character which, in our opinion, pervades the ‘long file’ of Italian novels, accounts also for that sovereign unconcern and easy impudence with which each appears to have borrowed the matter of his tales from his predecessors, altering merely names and dates, or slightly varying some minor incidents; a system which, though in other countries it would have been fatal to the reputation of an author, never seems to have weighed much with the Italian critics in their estimates of literary merit.

This general uniformity of manner, though of course it renders the Italian novelists rather a monotonous and wearisome study to those who make a point of going through them as a matter of historical inquiry, has its advantages for the lazy general reader, who is thus enabled, with much ease and sufficient accuracy, to appreciate the whole character of Italian fiction, from the examination of almost any one individual author of the series: and indeed the whole question of the originality, the peculiarities, the merits, and defects of these tales cannot, we think, be viewed with more advantage than in connexion with the first and greatest name on the list,—the Decameron of Boccaccio.

It is almost unnecessary, we presume, to inform our readers, that this work is a collection of a hundred tales, supposed to be told by a party consisting of seven ladies and three gentlemen, assembled at a villa, or rather two villas, near Florence, (the site of which has sadly puzzled the Italian commentators,) to which they had retired from the memorable pestilence which desolated that city in 1348. The tales are supposed to occupy ten days in narration, each member of the party relating ten tales, and presiding in turn over the amusements of the day.

The description of the pestilence, which forms the introduction to the novels, is imitated in its general outline from Thucydides, but filled up with a terrible minuteness of detail, which shows the narrator’s personal acquaintance with the miseries of which he is the historian. The pathological accuracy with which the rise and spreading of the disease is described; the gloomy despair, and still more fearful riot and jollity which pervade the town; the numerous and anxious plans

adopted by the citizens for their safety—all different, yet all leading to the same fatal result; the universal selfishness and corruption of morals which it produced,—are described with a solemn and stately precision, varied occasionally by passages of impassioned eloquence, and a judicious selection of individual incidents, which leave a deep impression of horror upon the mind. Such is the picture of the cattle going out at dawn and returning to their stalls at evening—‘quasi come razionali,’—after the death of the herdsmen,—which strikes the imagination with a sense of loneliness and desolation, like that produced by the solitary figure in the midst of a street of palaces, in one of Poussin’s delineations of the plague.*

When all this machinery of disease and terror has been exhausted, the scene suddenly changes. Florence and the pestilence are shut out, and we find ourselves in the circle of the fugitive party in the embowering shades of the Poggio Gherardi; where, ‘seated on the long green grass, where the sun could not enter, beside the cooling murmur of a fountain, and fanned by a soft breeze,’ we prepare to listen to the tales of the first day. From this moment all is gayety among the fugitives; like Lot’s family they ‘look not back on the city’ they had left but two short miles (*due piccole miglie*) behind them. The miseries of Florence, the loss of friends already dead, and the uncertain fate of those who were still alive, are forgotten in the gay round of ‘*Novelle*,’ ‘*Canzoni*,’ and ‘*Ballate*,’ which fill up the hours in this delicious retreat. And thus has Boccaccio beautifully illustrated that anomaly of the human mind, which, in seasons of strange calamity, leads it to indulge a reckless gayety in the midst of all that is calculated to inspire the profoundest sorrow, and to cling to life with a more desperate spirit of enjoyment, the nearer it seems to hasten to its close. Let us eat and drink, said the Florentines, for to-morrow we die!

The idea of thus enclosing his Tales in a frame-work, so as to give a kind of unity to the whole, though it had not yet been adopted by any author, either in France or Italy, (the *Fabliaux* and the *Novellino* having been the work of numerous hands,) was by no means the invention of Boccaccio. In the East, the great fountain from which the fictions of modern Europe were at that time derived, the plan was well known; and there, with the characteristic fondness of the Orientals for parabolic instructions, the Tales are generally represented as related for the purpose of conveying some important moral lesson, or effecting some great end of domestic or state policy. In the *Dolopathos*, of which it is supposed Boccaccio possessed a manuscript copy, and the general outline of which will be familiar to English readers, from the imitation under the title of *Turkish Tales*, the story which forms the connecting link of the rest, is that of a young prince, who, resisting the guilty love of one of his father’s queens, is accused by her to his father of the very crime he had refused to commit;—in short, an Oriental version of the *Phædra* and *Hippolitus*. The father hesitates, however, about condemning his son to death, and the queen relates a tale, the object of which is to overcome his irresolution. This is met by a counter tale on the part of the young prince’s tutors, to show the danger of rash measures. The queen replies in a third—and so on, till the invention of

* The story of the Death of the Hogs, looks a little apocryphal; but at all events, the blame does not lie with Boccaccio, for he has copied the incident very literally from the cotemporary chronicle of Giovanni Morelli, page 280.

the author is exhausted. This was sufficiently absurd; and Boccaccio, while he saw the advantage of connecting his tales, judiciously abandoned the idea of rendering them subservient to any higher purpose than that of amusing the party among whom they are told.

The invention to which he had recourse was certainly extremely beautiful. We cannot agree with Warton that the frame-work of the *Canterbury Tales* is in its general design superior to that of the *Decameron*. For though, as Mr. Dunlop has remarked, Chaucer's plan of a pilgrimage has this advantage, that the subject has thus a natural limitation, while Boccaccio's has no other limit but the imagination of the author, the design of the former seems to us to be liable to a more formidable objection—that tales told on horseback to a party of twenty-nine persons could never have been heard by them all. Perhaps of all modes of introducing a series of tales, none affords such advantages as that of placing the scene at sea, and supposing the tales related to dissipate the ennui of a voyage. And indeed it appears to us rather singular that so natural and obvious a plan should have so seldom been employed,—none of the Italian novelists having adopted it before Cintio, who supposes, that on the Sack of Rome by the Constable of Bourbon, ten ladies and gentlemen sailed for Marseilles, and, during the voyage, related the *Tales of Hecatommithi* for their amusement.* The extent of these 'entretiens des voyageurs sur la mer' is thus limited by the voyage, in the same manner as by Chaucer's idea of a pilgrimage; while the party are enabled to narrate or to listen, with the same convenience as among the shady walks and marble fountains of the *Villa Palimieri*.

In appreciating the inventive powers of Boccaccio from the tales to which this powerful introduction forms the prelude, our readers are probably aware that much difference of opinion prevails among Italian critics. While some are anxious to increase still farther the glory of the 'Tuscan artist' by denying his obligations to his predecessors, others have been equally solicitous to display their own critical acumen and research, by converting every trifling resemblance into a plagiarism. Perhaps the strangest whim is that of the learned Manni, who, with the professed view of exalting the literary glory of Boccaccio, endeavours to prove, in an amusing but most inconclusive quarto, that every one of Boccaccio's novels is founded on some popular tale then current in Italy, or on the historical events of the time.† It is not our intention to enter on the details of this *questio vexata*, which has already been done in a way that admits of no improvement, by Mr. Dunlop in his admirable *History of Fiction*; but we may state generally what appears

* The novels of Bisaccioni (a writer of the 17th century) are also supposed to be narrated 'sopra una nave, mentre questa era vicina per entrare in porto.'

† Not content with giving a local habitation and a name to the events and character of the *Tales*, Manni will have it that Boccaccio's party did actually meet just as described in the *Decameron*, and he thus gravely adverts to the difficulties of the subject — 'Non intendo io pero come l'adunanza descritta, composta in gran parte di femminili persone, avesse potuto agevolmente dilungarsi da Firenze a piedi, per giugnere alla villa di S. Anna presso Prato, e come agevole fosse stato loro altresì in tempo di grande infezione passare liberamente da più luoghi guardati e custoditi, a cagione della medesima pestilenza, quanti e credibile che se ne trovassero in sì lungo tratto;' and therefore he is inclined to bring the scene of action nearer Florence.

to us to be the result of a careful comparison of the Decameron with the works of the ruder novelists who preceded its illustrious author.

The sources which are commonly supposed to have furnished the greater part of his materials, are the various collections of Oriental Tales which were then current in Italy; the *Gesta Romanorum*, the old collection entitled the *Novellino* or *Cento Novelle Antiche*, and the *Fabliaux*. His obligations to these works, however, must be very differently proportioned.

The mass of Arabian fiction, as far as we are acquainted with it, seems to arrange itself in three classes: those supernatural tales, the brilliant machinery of which has influenced so strongly the imaginative literature of Europe; tales of domestic and comic adventure often singularly ingenious in their structure, and in which the events are produced merely by human agency; and those apologues or parables, in which the incidents are typical of some deeper and mystical meaning. Each class seems to have found its own admirers when the influence of Oriental fiction began to be felt in Europe. The supernatural world of Arabian fiction was transferred to the longer and more elaborate romances of chivalry; — the moral and mystical fictions were appropriated by the monks, and incorporated with the lives of saints and martyrs; — while the world of common life, with its lively pictures of gallantry and ingenious knavery, was congenial to the more worldly and unspiritualized character of the *Trouvères*, and was imitated by them without ceremony in the *Fabliaux*.

With what may be considered the higher or epic class of Arabian fable, Boccaccio has no connexion. He had no relish for the marvellous, and no taste for the employment of supernatural machinery. The Moral Apologues of the East had been collected principally in the *Clericalis Disciplina* of Alphonsus, and in the *Gesta Romanorum*; and from these, as well as from the old collection in the *Novellino*, which blends the orientalism of the *Gesta* with the fables of Chivalry, and with the historical incidents of the time, Boccaccio has certainly adopted several tales, and many particular incidents. But in almost every case he has done so with so many improvements, and has so finely varied the incidents, filled up a meagre outline, retrenched the absurdities of the original, improved the dialogues (which are rare), and clothed the whole with so rich a colouring of style, that, in every thing which renders invention valuable, he may be said to have invented them. He has appropriated them to himself, as La Fontaine afterwards did the tales of the Decameron, by giving them a new character; he found them of brick, and he left them of marble.

The other great branch of Arabian fiction is more intimately connected with the spirit of the Decameron, though the influence which we trace was probably only of a mediate nature. The numerous tales of common life in which the imagination of the Arabian fabulists, — rarely, if ever, exerted in the delineation of character, and painting men only in masses, and through the medium of professions, — had exhausted itself in the invention of adventures of a comic nature, in the contrivance of *imbroglios* and mistakes, in the artful arrangement of a chain of incidents, of which the extremes would often appear the most remote and improbable, were they not so happily united by the intermediate links, that the reader almost feels that any other termination would be out of place; — these tales had met with congenial admirers among the *Trouvères*. Too much men of the world to indulge

in visions of marvel and romance, they adopted the humbler manner of the Arabian fabulists, applied it to the circumstances of their own age, and gave birth to a multitude of tales of intrigue and knavery, and sometimes of gallantry and chivalrous devotion. Among these the comic preponderates; but in the few specimens of a more serious kind which they have left, they have displayed powers of no ordinary kind. The tale of Aucassin and Nicolette*, is, in ingenuity and beauty of incident, fully equal to any in the Decameron. In the comic or serio-comic class, none of Boccaccio's equal the frequently imitated tale of Les Trois Bossus, or the graceful levity of Le Manteau mal taillé. In fact, the advantages they possessed enabled them to paint with peculiar force, truth, and vivacity. Men, in general of acute and vigorous mind, though destitute of learning, and too often of principle; welcome guests in all society from their powers of amusing, but respected in none; experiencing every extreme of life, and apparently at home in all; sometimes dispelling the ennui of baronial castles; at others courting the society of humble vassals; and, wandering on the earth without any thing to attach them to their kind;—they had the amplest opportunity of observing accurately, and painting impartially, the changes of many-coloured life; and, if neither their ability nor their inclination prompted them to invent new worlds, they may fairly be said to have exhausted that of French manners in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is from these light and joyous compositions, and not from the *plat* and heavy annalists of the time, that we derive the best knowledge we possess of the state of society at that period. 'A straw thrown up into the air,' says the learned Selden, 'will show how the wind sits, which cannot be learned by casting up a stone.'

The style of the Fabliaux, too, though frequently disgustingly coarse, has in its general character a lightness and buoyancy, a tinge of naïve humour and vivacity, which breathes of the sunny skies and vine-covered hills of France; and which was singularly congenial to the mind of Boccaccio, accustomed to look on life in its brighter aspects, and, even in his tragic tales, indulging only a pleasing and tempered melancholy. Accordingly, it can hardly be doubted, that much of the general manner of the Decameron, so different from the unbending pomp of the Fiammetta and Filocopo, has been borrowed from the Fabliaux, though it appears there modified in such a manner as we should expect, by a union with classical recollections, and the more diffuse and turgid style of the romances of chivalry. It is in this view, then, rather as having copied *the manner* of the Trouvères, than as being indebted to them for particular tales, that Boccaccio is really an imitator. It is true we are in possession only of a small part of S. Palaye's vast collection; but out of a hundred and fifty-six specimens given by Le Grand, not more than six appear to us to have been directly borrowed by Boccaccio.

After all, then, a vast number remain to which he has an undoubted claim; and, what is of more importance, these are the best in the book. No lynx-eyed critic has yet deprived him of the invention of the Falcon,—the simplest, the least laboured, yet the most touching of all his tales;—of the deeply pathetic story of Girolamo and Salvestra—the

* This tale is translated in Way's Fabliaux, and has been very ingeniously converted by Madame Murat into a Fairy Tale, under the title of Etoilette, in the Lutins de Kernosy.

tale of the Lovers poisoned amidst their holiday rejoicings by the laurel leaf—the Pot of Basil—Sigismunda and Guiscardo—the happy illustration of the power of love contained in Cymon and Iphigenia—each perfect in its own class, and unequalled in the range of Italian novels. As a proof, too, how totally different are the imitations of Boccaccio from the rude originals on which they are founded, perhaps no fairer illustration could be selected than the well known tale of Titus and Gisippus (8th Giorn. 10.), which will be familiar to the English reader in the Alcander and Septimius of Goldsmith. The main idea of the story may be found in three writers before Boccaccio. It occurs in the Clericalis Disciplina of Alphonsus, in the Gesta Romanorum (Nov. 171.), and in the Collection of Le Grand, under the title of Les Deux Bons Amis. But all the better and more interesting parts of the tale are Boccaccio's; who has adorned the whole with a brilliancy of colouring which renders this legend, in the opinion of Italian critics, the most eloquent in the Decameron, or perhaps in the Italian language.

And this brings us to the style of the Decameron, in which, whatever may be thought of his incidents, Boccaccio's claims to originality are undoubted. And when we reflect what powers of mind were necessary to evolve order and beauty from the chaos of the Romanzo dialect, as it then existed, without models and without assistance,—and to frame a narrative style, which is at this day the standard to which the most eloquent of his countrymen are proud to conform, we may doubt whether the task does not demand a higher reach of intellect and imagination than any arrangement of incidents, however new and ingenious. Whether that style is the best adapted for the purpose of narrative, is another question. It is certainly the very perfection of elaborate musical writing,—flowing on like a copious river, confined by no narrow banks, broken by no precipices, and filling the ear and soothing the mind with a soft and ever-varying murmur. Perhaps this extreme sweetness becomes at last wearisome, and we long for some interruption of this melodious current,—some cessation of this stream of language,

‘ Which runs, and as it runs, for ever would run on.’

Undoubtedly the style of the Decameron is too musical and diffuse. The most tragic and the most comic events, description, narrative, and dialogue, are all given with the same plethoric fulness, the same ‘solemn loquaciousness’* of expression, which has since tinged the whole literature of Italy. But though objectionable as a whole, it is peculiarly calculated to produce an effect in tales of a quiet and pensive cast; and the recollection of some particular passages of melancholy beauty which we have long ago read, must often recur, we think, to the mind of every one who is not insensible to the pathos of sound.

To us the great charm of the Decameron consists, not so much in the effect of particular tales, as in the peculiarly happy manner in which the vast and varied materials it contains have been arranged, so that each occupies its proper share of importance and attention. The great aim of Boccaccio seems to have been to avoid all exaggeration, to render nothing too prominent or engrossing, to exhibit sketches rather than pictures of life. The spirit of the middle ages rises indeed before us, but its form is misty and dim. The actors of his Dramas—

* ‘Feierliche geschwätzigkeit.’ Bouterwek.

the petty princes and rude nobles of Italy, monks, nuns, pilgrims, merchants, usurers, robbers, and peasants—pass before us as in a brilliant but rapid procession, where the eye has no time to pause on individuals, and the mind retains little beyond the impression, that a stately and imposing pageant has gone by. The moving picture of the Decameron is purposely painted in a calm and subdued tone, with no strong lights or deep shadows, but tinged all over with a soft glow of kindly feeling, and breathing the very spirit of serenity and repose. Nothing is glaring, nothing oppressive: pathos and humour, incident and description, activity and repose succeed each other as in the drama of life, none engrossing attention, none excluding another, but all blending in tempered harmony. The vast range of Boccaccio's mind, which prevented any exclusive devotion to one class of feelings, is imaged forth in the infinite variety of the Decameron; and the admirably balanced union of powers which he possessed, in the profound art with which its discordant materials are reduced to a consistent whole.

In fact, when we begin to analyze more minutely the features of Boccaccio's mind, it will at once be seen that his strength lay in their union. Character painting was not the mode of the age; and Boccaccio was even less gifted in this respect than his cotemporary, our own Chaucer, as the least comparison of the personages of the Canterbury Tales with those in the Decameron, will evince. Boccaccio's are distinguished merely by station or sex; each of Chaucer's is marked by such characteristic traits, that he cannot possibly be confounded with his companion. 'I know them all,' says Dryden, 'as well as if I had supped with them.' Chaucer painted by minute touches, by the observance of small traits of character, and even of language. Boccaccio saw only the broader shades of distinction, and painted what he saw. In the same way, his pathos, though pleasing, is rarely deep. It seldom agitates the mind with any strong emotion, or leaves any other impression on the memory but that of a vague softness. His humour we cannot help thinking exceedingly indifferent; and, indeed, this remark applies to the whole series of Italian Novels, nothing being, in general, more melancholy than their wit, or more forced than their humour. Coarse allusions to personal defects, and practical jokes, are the wit of a rude age; true wit and ingenious pleasantry is the production of a very advanced state of civilization; and Boccaccio only reflected, in this particular, the manners of his times. Neither do we think that his powers of description, though considerable, are of the highest order. Except in the gloomy portrait of the plague, and in some few of the rural descriptions which preface or conclude the tales of each day, there is little that can be called forcible or defined. The vivacity and clearness of the ideas seem always to be sacrificed to the elaborate polish of the style.

GODWIN.*

WE find little of the author of Caleb Williams in the present work, except the name in the title-page. Either we are changed, or Mr. God-

* Cloudesley, a Tale; by the Author of Caleb Williams.—Vol. li. page 144. April, 1830.

win is changed, since he wrote that masterly performance. We remember the first time of reading it well, though now long ago. In addition to the singularity and surprise occasioned by seeing a romance written by a philosopher and politician, what a quickening of the pulse,—what an interest in the progress of the story,—what an eager curiosity in divining the future,—what an individuality and contrast in the characters,—what an elevation and what a fall was that of Falkland;—how we felt for his blighted hopes, his remorse, and despair, and took part with Caleb Williams as his ordinary and unformed sentiments are brought out, and rendered more and more acute by the force of circumstances, till hurried on by an increasing and uncontrollable impulse, he turns upon his proud benefactor and unrelenting persecutor, and in a mortal struggle, overthrows him on the vantage-ground of humanity and justice! There is not a moment's pause in the action or sentiments: the breath is suspended, the faculties wound up to the highest pitch, as we read. Page after page is greedily devoured. There is no laying down the book till we come to the end; and even then the words still ring in our ears, nor do the mental apparitions ever pass away from the eye of memory. Few books have made a greater impression than Caleb Williams on its first appearance. It was read, admired, parodied, dramatised. All parties joined in its praise. Those (not a few) who at the time favoured Mr. Godwin's political principles, hailed it as a new triumph of his powers, and as a proof that the stoicism of the doctrines he inculcated did not arise from any defect of warmth or enthusiasm of feeling, and that his abstract speculations were grounded in, and sanctioned by, an intimate knowledge of, and rare felicity in, developing the actual vicissitudes of human life. On the other hand, his enemies, or those who looked with a mixture of dislike and fear at the system of ethics advanced in the *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, were disposed to forgive the author's paradoxes for the truth of imitation with which he had depicted prevailing passions, and were glad to have something in which they could sympathize with a man of no mean capacity or attainments. At any rate, it was a new and startling event in literary history for a metaphysician to write a popular romance. The thing took, as all displays of unforeseen talent do with the public. Mr. Godwin was thought a man of very powerful and versatile genius; and in him the understanding and the imagination reflected a mutual and dazzling light upon each other. His *St. Leon* did not lessen the wonder, nor the public admiration of him, or rather 'seemed like another morn risen on mid-noon.' But from that time he has done nothing of superlative merit. He has imitated himself, and not well. He has changed the glittering spear, which always detected truth or novelty, for a leaden foil. We cannot say of his last work (*Cloudesley*),—'Even in his ashes live his wonted fires.' The story is cast indeed something in the same moulds as Caleb Williams; but they are not filled and running over with molten passion, or with scalding tears. The situations and characters, though forced and extreme, are without effect from the want of juxtaposition and collision. *Cloudesley* (the elder) is like Caleb Williams, a person of low origin, and rebels against his patron and employer; but he remains a characterless, passive, inefficient agent to the last,—forming his plans and resolutions at a distance,—not whirled from expedient to expedient, nor driven from one sleepless hiding-place to another; and his lordly and conscience-stricken accomplice (*Danvers*) keeps his

state in like manner, brooding over his guilt and remorse in solitude, with scarce an object or effort to vary the round of his reflections,—a lengthened paraphrase of grief. The only dramatic incidents in the course of the narrative are, the sudden metamorphosis of the Florentine Count Camaldoli into the robber St. Elmo, and the unexpected and opportune arrival of Lord Danvers in person, with a coach and four and liveries, at Naples, just in time to save his ill-treated nephew from a violent death. The rest is a well-written essay, or theme, composed as an exercise to gain a mastery of style and topics.

There is, indeed, no falling off in point of style or command of language in the work before us. Cloudesley is better written than Caleb Williams. The expression is everywhere terse, vigorous, elegant:—a polished mirror without a wrinkle. But the spirit of the execution is lost in the inertness of the subject-matter. There is a dearth of invention, a want of character and grouping. There are clouds of reflections without any new occasion to call them forth;—an expanded flow of words without a single pointed remark. A want of acuteness and originality is not a fault that is generally chargeable upon our author's writings. Nor do we lay the blame upon him now, but upon circumstances. Had Mr. Godwin been bred a monk, and lived in the good old times, he would assuredly either have been burnt as a free-thinker, or have been rewarded with a mitre, for a tenth part of the learning and talent he has displayed. He might have reposed on a rich benefice, and the reputation he had earned, enjoying the *otium cum dignitate*, or at most relieving his official cares by revising successive editions of his former productions, and enshrining them in cases of sandal-wood and crimson velvet in some cloistered hall or princely library. He might then have courted

————— ‘retired leisure,
That in trim gardens takes its pleasure,’—

have seen his peaches ripen in the sun; and, smiling secure on fortune and on fame, have repeated with complacency the motto — *Horas non numero nisi serenas!* But an author by profession knows nothing of all this. His is only ‘the iron rod, the torturing hour.’ He lies ‘stretched upon the rack of restless ecstasy:’ he runs the everlasting gauntlet of public opinion. He must write on, and if he had the strength of Hercules and the wit of Mercury, he must in the end write himself down.

‘And like a gallant horse, fallen in first rank,
Lies there for pavement to the abject rear,
O’er-run and trampled on.’

He cannot let well done alone. He cannot take his stand on what he has already achieved, and say, Let it be a durable monument to me and mine, and a covenant between me and the world for ever! He is called upon for perpetual new exertions, and urged forward by ever-craving necessities. The *wolf* must be kept from the door; the *printer's devil* must not go empty-handed away. He makes a second attempt, and though equal perhaps to the first, because it does not excite the same surprise, it falls tame and flat on the public mind. If he pursues the real bent of his genius, he is thought to grow dull and monotonous; or if he varies his style, and tries to cater for the capricious appetite of the town, he either escapes by miracle or breaks down that way, amidst the shout of the multitude and the condolence of friends, to see the

idol of the moment pushed from its pedestal, and reduced to its proper level. There is only one living writer who can pass through this ordeal; and if he had barely written half what he has done, his reputation would have been none the less. His inexhaustible facility makes the willing world believe there is not much in it. Still, there is no alternative. Popularity, like one of the Danaides, imposes impossible tasks on her votary,—to pour water into sieves, to reap the wind. If he does nothing, he is forgotten; if he attempts more than he can perform, he gets laughed at for his pains. He is impelled by circumstances to fresh sacrifices of time, of labour, and of self-respect; parts with well-earned fame for a newspaper puff, and sells his birth-right for a mess of pottage. In the meanwhile, the public wonder why an author writes so badly and so much. With all his efforts, he builds no house, leaves no inheritance, lives from hand to mouth, and though condemned to daily drudgery for a precarious subsistence, is expected to produce none but works of first-rate genius. No; learning unconsecrated, unincorporated, unendowed, is no match for the importunate demands and thoughtless ingratitude of the reading public.

———— ‘ O, let not virtue seek
Remuneration for the thing it was!
To have done, is to hang,
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery;—
That all, with one consent, praise new-born gaudes,
Though they are made and moulded of things past;
And give to dust, that is a little gilt,
More laud than gilt o’er-dusted.’

If we wished to please Mr. Godwin, we should say that his last work was his best; but we cannot do this in justice to him or to ourselves. Its greatest fault is, that (as Mr. Bayes would have declared) there is nothing ‘to elevate and surprise’ in it. There is a story, to be sure, but you know it all beforehand, just as well as after having read the book. It is like those long straight roads that travellers complain of on the Continent, where you see from one end of your day’s journey to the other, and carry the same prospect with you, like a map in your hand, the whole way. Mr. Godwin has laid no ambuscade for the unwary reader—no picturesque group greets the eye as you pass on—no sudden turn at an angle places you on the giddy verge of a precipice. Nevertheless, our author’s courage never flags. Mr. Godwin is an eminent rhetorician; and he shows it in this, that he expatiates, discusses, amplifies, with equal fervour, and unabated ingenuity, on the merest accidents of the way-side, or common-places of human life. Thus, for instance, if a youth of eleven or twelve years of age is introduced upon the carpet, the author sets himself to show, with a laudable candour and communicativeness, what the peculiar features of that period of life are, and ‘takes an inventory’ of all the particulars,—such as sparkling eyes, roses in the cheeks, a smooth forehead, flaxen locks, elasticity of limb, lively animal spirits, and all the flush of hope,—as if he were describing a novelty, or some *terra incognita*, to the reader. In like manner, when a young man of twenty is confined in a dungeon as belonging to a gang of banditti, and going to be hanged, great pains are taken through three or four pages to convince us, that at that period of life this is no very agreeable prospect; that the feelings of youth are more acute and sanguine than those of age; that, therefore, we are to take a due and pro-

portionate interest in the tender years, and blighted hopes of the younger Cloudesley; and that if any means could be found to rescue him from his present perilous situation, it would be a great relief, not only to him, but to all humane and compassionate persons. Every man's strength is his weakness, and turns in some way or other against himself. Mr. Godwin has been so long accustomed to trust to his own powers, and to draw upon his own resources, that he comes at length to imagine that he can build a palace of words upon nothing. When he lavished the colours of style, and the exuberant strength of his fancy, on descriptions like those of the character of Margaret, the wife of St. Leon, or of his musings in the dungeon of Bethlem Gabor, or of his enthusiasm on discovering the philosopher's stone, and being restored to youth and the plenitude of joy by drinking the *Elixir Vitæ*;—or when he recounts the long and lasting despair which succeeded that utter separation from his kind, and that deep solitude which followed him into crowds and cities,—deeper and more appalling than the dungeon of Bethlem Gabor,—we were never weary of being borne along by the golden tide of eloquence, supplied from the true sources of passion and feeling. But when he bestows the same elaboration of phrases, and artificial arrangement of sentences, to set off the most trite and obvious truisms, we confess it has to us a striking effect of the *bathos*.

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We have a graver charge yet to bring against Mr. Godwin on the score of style, than that it leads him into useless amplification: from his desire to load and give effect to his descriptions, he runs different characters and feelings into one another. By not stopping short of excess and hyperbole, he loses the line of distinction, and 'o'ersteps 'the modesty of nature.' All his characters are patterns of vice or virtue. They are carried to extremes,—they are abstractions of woe, miracles of wit and gaiety,—gifted with every grace and accomplishment that can be enumerated in the same page; and they are not only prodigies in themselves, but destined to immortal renown, though we have never heard of their names before. This is not like a veteran in the art, but like the raptures of some boarding-school girl in love with every new face or dress she sees. It is difficult to say which is the most extraordinary genius,—the improvisatori Bernardino Perfetti, or his nephew, Francesco, or young Julian. Mr. Godwin still sees with 'eyes of youth.' Irene is a Greek, the model of beauty and of conjugal faith. Eudocia, her maid, who marries the elder Cloudesley, is a Greek too, and nearly as handsome and as exemplary in her conduct. Again, on the same principle, the account of Irene's devotion to her father and her husband, is by no means clearly discriminated. The spiritual feeling is exaggerated till it is confounded with the passionate; and the passionate is spiritualized in the same incontinence of tropes and figures, till it loses its distinctive character. Each sentiment, by being over-done, is neutralized into a sort of platonics. It is obvious to remark, that the novel of Cloudesley has no hero, no principal figure. The attention is divided, and wavers between Meadows, who is a candidate for the reader's sympathy through the first half volume, and whose affairs and love adventures at St. Petersburg are huddled up in haste, and broke off in the middle; Lord Danvers, who is the guilty sufferer; Cloudesley, his sullen, dilatory Mentor; and Julian, (the supposed offspring of Cloudesley, but real son of Lord Alton, and nephew

of Lord Danvers,) who turns out the fortunate youth of the piece. The story is awkwardly told. Meadows begins it with an account of himself, and a topographical description of the Russian empire, which has nothing to do with the subject; and nearly through the remainder of the work, listens to a speech of Lord Danvers, recounting his own history and that of Julian, which lasts for six hundred pages without interruption or stop. It is the longest parenthesis in a narrative that ever was known. Meadows then emerges from his *incognito* once more, as if he had been hid behind a curtain, and gives the *coup-de-grace* to his own auto-biography, and the lingering sufferings of his patron. The plot is borrowed from a real event that took place concerning a disputed succession in the middle of the last century, and which gave birth not long after to a novel with the title of *Annesley*. We should like to meet with a copy of this work, in order to see how a writer of less genius would get to the end of his task, and carry the reader along with him without the aid of those subtle researches and lofty declamations with which Mr. Godwin has supplied the place of facts and circumstances. The published trial, we will hazard a conjecture, has more 'mark and likelihood' in it. This is the beauty of Sir Walter Scott: he takes a legend or an actual character as he finds it, while other writers think they have not performed their engagements and acquitted themselves with applause, till they have slobbered over the plain face of nature with paint and varnish of their own. They conceive that truth is a plagiarism, and *the thing as it happened* a forgery and imposition on the public. They stand right before their subject, and say 'Nay, but hear me first!' We know no other merit in the Author of Waverley than that he is never this opaque, obtrusive body, getting in the way and eclipsing the sun of truth and nature, which shines with broad universal light through his different works. If we were to describe the secret of this author's success in three words, we should say, that it consists in the *absence of egotism*.

Mr. Godwin, in his preface, remarks, that as Caleb Williams was intended as a paraphrase of 'Blue Beard,' the present work may be regarded as a paraphrase of the story of the 'Children in the Wood.' *Multum abludit imago*. He has at least contrived to take the sting of simplicity out of it. It is a very adult, self-conscious set of substitutes he has given us for the two children, wandering hand in hand, the robin-redbreast, and their leafy bed. The grand eloquence, the epic march of Cloudesley, is beyond the ballad-style. In a word, the fault of this and some other of the author's productions is, that the critical and didactic part overlays the narrative and dramatic part; as we see in some editions of the poets, where there are two lines of original text, and the rest of the page is heavy with the lumber and pedantry of the commentators. The writer does not call characters from the dead, or conjure them from the regions of fancy, to paint their peculiar physiognomy, or tell us their story, so much as (like the anatomist) to dissect and demonstrate on the insertion of the bones, the springs of the muscles, and those understood principles of life and motion which are common to the species. Now, in a novel, we want the individual, and not the *genus*. The tale of Cloudesley is a dissertation on remorse. Besides, this truth of science is often a different thing from the truth of nature, which is modified by a thousand accidents, 'subject to all the 'skyey influences;'—not a mechanical principle, brooding over and working every thing out of itself. Nothing, therefore, gives so little ap-

pearance of a resemblance to reality as this abstract identity and violent continuity of purpose. Not to say that this cutting up and probing of the internal feelings and motives, without a reference to external objects, tends, like the operations of the anatomist, to give a morbid and unwholesome taint to the surrounding atmosphere.

Mr. Godwin's mind is, we conceive, essentially active, and therefore may naturally be expected to wear itself out sooner than those that are passive to external impressions, and receive continual new accessions to their stock of knowledge and acquirement :—

—— ‘ A fiery soul that working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
And o'er-inform'd its tenement of clay.’

That some of this author's latter works are (in our judgment) comparatively feeble, is, therefore, no matter of surprise to us, and still less is it matter of reproach or triumph. We look upon it as a consequence incident to that constitution of mind and operation of the faculties. To quarrel with the author on this account, is to reject all that class of excellence of which he is the representative, and perhaps stands at the head. A writer who gives us *himself*, cannot do this twenty times following. He gives us the best and most prominent part of himself first ; and afterwards ‘ but the lees and dregs remain.’ If a writer takes patterns and *fac-similes* of external objects, he may give us twenty different works, each better than the other, though this is not likely to happen. Such a one makes use of the universe as his *common-place book* ; and there is no end of the quantity or variety. The other sort of genius is his own microcosm, deriving almost all from within ; and as this is different from every thing else, and is to be had at no other source, so it soon degenerates into a repetition of itself, and is confined within circumscribed limits. We do not rank ourselves in the number of ‘ those ‘ base plebeians,’ as Don Quixote expresses it, ‘ who cry, *Long life to the conqueror !*’ And, so far, the author is better off than the warrior, that ‘ after a thousand victories once foiled,’ he does not remain in the hands of his enemies,

‘ And all the rest forgot, for which he toil'd.

He is not judged of by his last performance, but his best,—that which is seen farthest off, and stands out with time and distance ; and in this respect, Mr. Godwin may point to more than one monument of his powers of no mean height and durability. As we do not look upon books as fashions, and think that ‘ a great man's memory may last more ‘ than half a year,’ we still look at our author's talents with the same respect as ever—on his industry and perseverance under some discouragements with more ; and we shall try to explain, as briefly and as impartially as we can, in what the peculiarity of his genius consists, and on what his claim to distinction is founded.

Mr. Godwin, we suspect, regards his *Political Justice* as his great work—his passport to immortality ; or perhaps he balances between this and *Caleb Williams*. Now, it is something for a man to have two works of so opposite a kind about which he and his admirers can be at a loss to say, in which he has done best. We never heard his title to originality in either of these performances called in question : yet they are as distinct, as to style and subject-matter, as if two different persons wrote them. No one in reading the philosophical treatise would sus-

pect the embryo romance: those who personally know Mr. Godwin would as little anticipate either. The man differs from the author, at least as much as the author in this case apparently did from himself. It is as if a magician had produced some mighty feat of his art without warning. He is not deeply learned; nor is he much beholden to a knowledge of the world: he has no passion but a love of fame, or we may add to this another, the love of truth, for he has never betrayed his cause or swerved from his principles, to gratify a little temporary vanity: his senses are not acute: but it cannot be denied that he is a man of great capacity and of uncommon genius. How is this seeming contradiction to be reconciled? Mr. Godwin is by way of distinction and emphasis an author; he is so not only by habit, but by nature, and by the whole turn of his mind. To make a book is with him the prime end and use of creation. His is the *scholastic* character handed down in its integrity to the present day. If he had cultivated a more extensive intercourse with the world, with nature, or even with books, he would not have been what he is—he could not have done what he has done. Mr. Godwin in society is nothing; but shut him up by himself, set him down to write a book,—it is then that the electric spark begins to unfold itself,—to expand, to kindle, to illumine, to melt, or shatter all in its way. With little knowledge of the subject, with little interest in it at first, he turns it slowly in his mind,—one suggestion gives rise to another,—he calls home, arranges, scrutinizes his thoughts; he bends his whole strength to his task; he seizes on some one view more striking than the rest, he holds it with a convulsive grasp,—he will not let it go; and this is the clew that conducts him triumphantly through the labyrinth of doubt and obscurity. Some leading truth, some master-passion, is the secret of his daring and his success, which he winds and turns at his pleasure, like Perseus his winged steed. An idea having once taken root in his mind, grows there like a germ: ‘at first no bigger than a mustard-seed,—then a great tree overshadowing the whole earth.’ The progress of his reflections resembles the circles that spread from a centre when a stone is thrown into the water. Every thing is enlarged, heightened, refined. The blow is repeated, and each impression is made more intense than the last. Whatever strengthens the favourite conception is summoned to its aid: whatever weakens or interrupts it is scornfully discarded. All is the effect, not of feeling, not of fancy, not of intuition, but of one sole purpose, and of a determined will operating on a clear and consecutive understanding. His *Caleb Williams* is the illustration of a single passion; his *Political Justice* is the insisting on a single proposition or view of a subject.* In both, there is the same pertinacity and unity of design, the same agglomeration of objects round a centre, the same aggrandizement of some one thing at the expense of every other, the same sagacity in discovering what makes for its purpose, and blindness to every thing but that. His genius is not dramatic; but it has something of an heroic cast; he gains new trophies in intellect, as the conqueror overruns new provinces and kingdoms, by patience and boldness; and he is great because he wills to be so.

We have said that Mr. Godwin has shown great versatility of talent in his different works. The works themselves have considerable monotony; and this must be the case, since they are all bottomed on nearly the same principle of an uniform *keeping* and strict totality of impres-

sion. We do not hold with the doctrines or philosophy of the *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*; but we should be dishonest to deny that it is an ingenious and splendid—and we may also add, useful piece of sophistical declamation. If Mr. Godwin is not right, he has shown what is wrong in the view of morality he advocates, by carrying it to the utmost extent with unflinching spirit and ability.

Mr. Godwin was the first *whole-length* broacher of the doctrine of *Utility*. He took the whole duty of man—all other passions, affections, rules, weaknesses, oaths, gratitude, promises, friendship, natural piety, patriotism,—infused them in the glowing cauldron of universal benevolence, and ground them into powder under the unsparing weight of the convictions of the individual understanding. The entire and complicated mass and texture of human society and feeling was to pass through the furnace of this new philosophy, and to come out renovated and changed without a trace of its former Gothic ornaments, fantastic disproportions, embossing, or relief. It was as if an angel had descended from another sphere to promulgate a new code of morality; and who, clad in a panoply of light and truth, unconscious alike of the artificial strength and inherent weakness of man's nature,—supposing him to have nothing to do with the flesh, the world, or the Devil,—should lay down a set of laws and principles of action for him, as if he were a pure spirit. But such a mere abstracted intelligence would not require any rules or forms to guide his conduct or prompt his volitions. And this is the effect of Mr. Godwin's book—to absolve a rational and voluntary agent from all ties, but a conformity to the independent dictates and strict obligations of the understanding:—

‘Within his bosom reigns another lord,
Reason, sole judge and umpire of itself.’

We own that if man were this pure, abstracted essence,—if he had not senses, passions, prejudices,—if custom, will, imagination, example, opinion, were nothing, and reason were *all in all*;—if the author, in a word, could establish as the foundation, what he assumes as the result of his system, namely, the omnipotence of mind over matter, and the triumph of truth over every warped and partial bias of the heart—then we see no objection to his scheme taking place, and no possibility of any other having ever been substituted for it. But this would imply that the mind's eye can see an object equally well whether it is near or a thousand miles off,—that we can take an interest in the people in the moon, or in ages yet unborn, as if they were our own flesh and blood,—that we can sympathize with a perfect stranger, as with our dearest friend, at a moment's notice,—that habit is not an ingredient in the growth of affection,—that no check need be provided against the strong bias of self-love,—that we can achieve any art or accomplishment by a volition, master all knowledge with a thought; and that in this well-disciplined intuition and faultless transparency of soul, we can take cognizance (without presumption and without mistake) of all causes and consequences,—establish an equal and impartial interest in the chain of created beings,—discard all petty feelings and minor claims,—throw down the obstructions and stumbling-blocks in the way of these grand cosmopolite views of disinterested philanthropy, and hold the balance even between ourselves and the universe. It were ‘a consummation devoutly to be wished;’ and Mr. Godwin is not to be taxed with

blame for having boldly and ardently aspired to it. We meet him on the ground, not of the desirable but the practicable. It were better that a man were an angel or a god than what he is ; but he can neither be one nor the other. Enclosed in the shell of self, he sees a little way beyond himself, and feels what concerns others still more slowly. To require him to attain the highest point of perfection, is to fling him back to grovel in the mire of sensuality and selfishness. He must get on by the use and management of the faculties which God has given him, and not by striking more than one half of these with the dead palsy. To refuse to avail ourselves of mixed motives and imperfect obligations, in a creature like man, whose ‘very name is frailty,’ and who is a compound of contradictions, is to lose the substance in catching at the shadow. It is as if a man would be enabled to fly by cutting off his legs. If we are not allowed to love our neighbour better than a stranger, that is, if habit and sympathy are to make no part of our affections, the consequence will be, not that we shall love a stranger more, but that we shall love our neighbour less, and care about nobody but ourselves. These partial and personal attachments are ‘the scale by which we ascend’ to sentiments of general philanthropy. Are we to act upon pure speculation, without knowing the circumstances of the case, or even the parties?—for it would come to that. If we act from a knowledge of these, and bend all our thoughts and efforts to alleviate some immediate distress, are we to take no more interest in it than in a case of merely possible and contingent suffering? This is to put the known upon a level with the unknown, the real with the imaginary. It is to say that habit, sense, sympathy, are non-entities. It is a contradiction in terms. But if man were such a being as Mr. Godwin supposes, that is, a perfect intelligence, there would be no contradiction in it ; for then he would have the same knowledge of whatever was possible, as of his gross and actual experience, and would feel the same interest in it, and act with the same energy and certainty upon a sheer hypothesis, as now upon a *matter-of-fact*. We can look at the clouds, but we cannot stand upon them. Mr. Godwin takes one element of the human mind, the *understanding*, and makes it the whole ; and hence he falls into solecisms and extravagancies, the more striking and fatal in proportion to his own acuteness of reasoning, and honesty of intention. He has, however, the merit of having been the first to show up the abstract, or *Utilitarian*, system of morality in its fullest extent, whatever may have been pretended to the contrary ; and those who wish to study the question, and not to take it for granted, cannot do better than refer to the *first* edition of the *Enquiry concerning Political Justice* ; for afterwards Mr. Godwin, out of complaisance to the public, qualified, and in some degree neutralized, his own doctrines.

Our author, not contented with his ethical honours, (for no work of the kind could produce a stronger sensation, or gain more converts than this did at the time,) determined to enter upon a new career, and fling him into the *arena* once more ; thus challenging public opinion with singular magnanimity and confidence in himself. He did not stand ‘shivering on the brink’ of his just-acquired reputation, and fear to tempt the perilous stream of popular favour again. The success of Caleb Williams justified the experiment. There was the same hardihood and gallantry of appeal in both. In the former case, the author had screwed himself up to the most rigid logic ; in the latter, he gave

unbounded scope to the suggestions of fancy. It cannot be denied that Mr. Godwin is, in the pugilistic phrase, an *out-and-outer*. He does not stop till he 'reaches the verge of all we hate:' is it to be wondered if he sometimes falls over? He certainly did not do this in Caleb Williams or St. Leon. Both were eminently successful; and both, as we conceive, treated of subjects congenial to Mr. Godwin's mind. The one, in the character of Falkland, embodies that love of fame and passionate respect for intellectual excellence, which is a cherished inmate of the author's bosom; (the desire of undying renown breathes through every page and line of the story, and sheds its lurid light over the close, as it has been said that the genius of war blazes through the Iliad;) — in the hero of the other, St. Leon, Mr. Godwin has depicted, as well he might, the feelings and habits of a solitary recluse, placed in new and imaginary situations: but from the philosophical to the romantic visionary, there was perhaps but one step. We give the decided preference to Caleb Williams over St. Leon; but if it is more original and interesting, the other is more imposing and eloquent. In the suffering and dying Falkland, we feel the heart-strings of our human being break; in the other work, we are transported to a state of fabulous existence, but unfolded with ample and gorgeous circumstances. The palm-tree waves over the untrodden path of luxuriant fiction; we tread with tip-toe elevation and throbbing heart the high hill-tops of boundless existence; and the dawn of hope and renovated life makes strange music in our breast, like the strings of Memnon's harp, touched by the morning's sun. After these two works he fell off; he could not sustain himself at that height by the force of genius alone, and Mr. Godwin has unfortunately no resources but his genius. He has no Edie Ochiltree at his elbow. His *New Man of Feeling* we forget; though we well remember the old one by our Scottish Addison, Mackenzie. Mandeville, which followed, is morbid and disagreeable; it is a description of a man and his ill-humour, carried to a degree of derangement. The reader is left far behind. Mr. Godwin has attempted two plays, neither of which has succeeded, nor could succeed. If a tragedy consisted of a series of soliloquies, nobody could write it better than our author. But the essence of the drama depends on the alternation and conflict of different passions, and Mr. Godwin's *forte* is harping on the same string. He is a reformist, both as it regards the world and himself. If he is told of a fault, he amends it if he can. His *Life of Chaucer* was objected to as too romantic and dashing; and in his late *History of the Commonwealth*, he has gone into an excess the other way. His style creeps, and hitches in dates and authorities. We must not omit his *Lives of Edward and John Phillips*, the nephews of Milton — an interesting contribution to literary history; and his *Observations on Judge Eyre's Charge to the Jury in 1794*, — one of the most acute and seasonable political pamphlets that ever appeared. He some years ago wrote an *Essay on Sepulchres*, which contained an idle project enough, but was enriched with some beautiful reflections on old and new countries, and on the memorials of posthumous fame. It is a singular circumstance that our author should maintain for twenty years, that Mr. Malthus's theory (in opposition to his own) was unanswerable, and then write an answer to it, which did not much mend the matter. It is worth knowing (in order to trace the history and progress of the intellectual character) that the author of *Political Justice* and *Caleb Williams* commenced his career as a dissenting clergy-

man; and the book-stalls sometimes present a volume of *Sermons* by him, and we believe, an *English Grammar*.

We cannot tell whether Mr. Godwin will have reason to be pleased with our opinion of him; at least, he may depend on our sincerity, and will know what it is.*

JEAN PAUL FRIEDRICH RICHTER.†

EXCEPT by name, Jean Paul Friedrich Richter is little known out of Germany. The only thing connected with him, we think, that has reached this country, is his saying, imported by Madame de Stael, and thankfully pocketed by most newspaper critics:—‘Providence has given to the French the empire of the land, to the English that of the sea, to the Germans that of—the air!’ Of this last element, indeed, his own genius might easily seem to have been a denizen: so fantastic, many-coloured, far-grasping, everyway perplexed and extraordinary, is his mode of writing, that to translate him properly is next to impossible; nay, a dictionary of his works has actually been in part published for the use of German readers! These things have restricted his sphere of action, and may long restrict it, to his own country: but there, in return, he is a favourite of the first class: studied through all his intricacies with trustful admiration, and a love which tolerates much. During the last forty years, he has been continually before the public, in various capacities, and growing generally in esteem with all ranks of critics; till, at length, his gainsayers have been either silenced or convinced; and Jean Paul, at first reckoned half-mad, has long ago vindicated his singularities to nearly universal satisfaction, and now combines popularity with real depth of endowment, in perhaps a greater degree than any other writer; being second in the latter point to scarcely more than one of his contemporaries, and in the former second to none.

The biography of so distinguished a person could scarcely fail to be interesting, especially his autobiography; which accordingly we wait for, and may in time submit to our readers, if it seem worthy: meanwhile, the history of his life, so far as outward events characterise it, may be stated in few words. He was born at Wunsiedel in Bayreuth, in March 1763. His father was a subaltern teacher in the *Gymnasium* of the place, and afterwards promoted to be clergyman at Schwarzbach on the Saale. Richter’s early education was of the scantiest sort; but his fine faculties and unwearied diligence supplied every defect. Unable to purchase books, he borrowed what he could come at, and transcribed from them, often great part of their contents,—a habit of excerpting which continued with him through life, and influenced, in more than one way, his mode of writing and study. To the last, he was an insatiable and universal reader; so that his extracts accumulated

* See another character of Godwin in the review of his “Lives of the Nephews of Milton,” Vol. xxv. page 485. His other works are noticed in Vol. i. page 24. Vol. iii. page 437. Vol. vi. page 182. Vol. xxxv. page 362.

† Sketch of his Life and Character. Critical Remarks on his Writings.—Vol. xlvi. page 176. June, 1827.

on his hands, 'till they filled whole chests.' In 1780, he went to the University of Leipzig; with the highest character, in spite of the impediments which he had struggled with, for talent and acquirement. Like his father, he was destined for Theology; from which, however, his vagrant genius soon diverged into Poetry and Philosophy, to the neglect, and, ere long, to the final abandonment, of his appointed profession. Not well knowing what to do, he now accepted a tutorship in some family of rank; then he had pupils in his own house—which, however, like his way of life, he often changed; for by this time he had become an author, and, in his wanderings over Germany, was putting forth,—now here, now there,—the strangest books, with the strangest titles: For instance—'*Greenland Lawsuits*;'—'*Biographical Recreations under the Cranium of a Giantess*;'—'*Selection from the Papers of the Devil*;'—and the like. In these indescribable performances, the splendid faculties of the writer, luxuriating as they seemed in utter riot, could not be disputed; nor, with all its extravagance, the fundamental strength, honesty, and tenderness of his nature. Genius will reconcile men to much. By degrees, Jean Paul began to be considered not a strange, crackbrained mixture of enthusiast and buffoon, but a man of infinite humour, sensibility, force, and penetration. His writings procured him friends and fame; and at length a wife and a settled provision. With Caroline Mayer his good spouse, and a pension (in 1802) from the King of Bavaria, he settled in Bayreuth, the capital of his native province; where he lived thenceforth, diligent and celebrated in many new departments of literature; and died on the 14th of November 1825, loved as well as admired by all his countrymen, and most by those who had known him most intimately.

A huge, irregular man, both in mind and person (for his portrait is quite a physiognomical study), full of fire, strength, and impetuosity, Richter seems, at the same time, to have been, in the highest degree, mild, simple-hearted, humane. He was fond of conversation, and might well shine in it: he talked, as he wrote, in a style of his own, full of wild strength and charms, to which his natural Bayreuth accent often gave additional effect. Yet he loved retirement, the country, and all natural things: from his youth upwards, he himself tells us, he may almost be said to have lived in the open air; it was among groves and meadows that he studied—often that he wrote. Even in the streets of Bayreuth, we have heard, he was seldom seen without a flower in his breast. A man of quiet tastes, and warm, compassionate affections! His friends he must have loved as few do. Of his poor and humble mother he often speaks by allusion, and never without reverence and overflowing tenderness. 'Unhappy is the man,' says he, 'for whom 'his own mother has not made all other mothers venerable!' and elsewhere:—'O thou who hast still a father and a mother, thank God 'for it in the day when thy soul is full of joyful tears, and needs a 'bosom wherein to shed them!'—We quote the following sentences from Doering, almost the only memorable thing he has written in this volume:—

'Richter's studying or sitting apartment offered, about this time (1793), a true and beautiful emblem of his simple and noble way of thought, which comprehended at once the high and the low. Whilst 'his mother, who then lived with him, busily pursued her household 'work, occupying herself about stove and dresser, Jean Paul was 'sitting in a corner of the same room, at a simple writing-desk, with

‘ few or no books about him, but merely with one or two drawers containing excerpts and manuscripts. The jingle of the household operations seemed not at all to disturb him, any more than did the cooing of the pigeons, which fluttered to and fro in the chamber, — a place, indeed, of considerable size.’ — p. 8.

Our venerable Hooker, we remember, also enjoyed, ‘ the jingle of household operations,’ and the more questionable jingle of shrewd tongues to boot, while he wrote ; but the good thrifty mother, and the cooing pigeons, were wanting. Richter came afterwards to live in finer mansions, and had the great and learned for associates ; but the gentle feelings of those days abode with him : through life he was the same substantial, determinate, yet meek and tolerating man. It is seldom that so much rugged energy can be so blandly attempered — that so much vehemence and so much softness will go together.

The expected edition of Richter’s works is to be in sixty volumes : and they are no less multifarious than extensive ; embracing subjects of all sorts, from the highest problems of transcendental philosophy, and the most passionate poetical delineations, to *Golden Rules for the Weather-Prophet*, and instructions in the *Art of Falling Asleep*. His chief productions are novels : the *Unsichtbare Loge* (Invisible Lodge) ; *Flegeljahre* (Wild-Oats) ; *Life of Fixlein* ; the *Jubelsenor* (Parson in Jubilee) ; *Schmelzle’s Journey to Flätz* ; *Katzenberger’s Journey to the Bath* ; *Life of Fibel* ; with many lighter pieces ; and two works of a higher order, *Hesperus* and *Titan*, the largest and the best of his novels. It was the former that first (in 1795) introduced him into decisive and universal estimation with his countrymen : the latter, he himself, with the most judicious of his critics, regarded as his master-piece. But the name Novelist, as we in England must understand it, would ill describe so vast and discursive a genius ; for with all his grotesque, tumultuous pleasantry, Richter is a man of a truly earnest, nay, high and solemn character ; and seldom writes without a meaning far beyond the sphere of common romancers. *Hesperus* and *Titan* themselves, though in form nothing more than ‘ novels of real life,’ as the Minerva Press would say, have solid metal enough in them to furnish whole circulating libraries, were it beaten into the usual filigree ; and much which, attenuate it as we might, no quarterly subscriber could well carry with him. Amusement is often, in part almost always, a mean with Richter ; rarely or never his highest end. His thoughts, his feelings, the creations of his spirit, walk before us embodied under wondrous shapes, in motley and ever-fluctuating groups : but his essential character, however he disguise it, is that of a Philosopher and moral Poet, whose study has been human nature, whose delight and best endeavour are with all that is beautiful, and tender, and mysteriously sublime in the fate or history of man. This is the purport of his writings, whether their form be that of fiction or of truth ; the spirit that pervades and ennobles his delineations of common life, his wild wayward dreams, allegories, and shadowy imaginings, no less than his disquisitions of a nature directly scientific.

But in this latter province also, Richter has accomplished much. His *Vorschule der Aesthetik* (Introduction to Aesthetics*) is a work on poetic

* From *αισθανομαι*, to feel. A word invented by Baumgarten (some eighty years ago), to express generally the *Science of the Fine Arts* ; and now in universal use among the Germans. Perhaps we also might as well adopt it ; at least if any such *science* should ever arise among us.

art, based on principles of no ordinary depth and compass, abounding in noble views, and, notwithstanding its frolicsome exuberance, in sound and subtle criticism; esteemed even in Germany, where Criticism has long been treated of as a science, and by such persons as Winkelmann, Kant, Herder, and the Schlegels. Of this work we could speak long, did our limits allow. We fear, it might astonish many an honest brother of our craft, were he to read it; and altogether perplex and dash his maturest councils, if he chanced to understand it.—Richter has also written on Education, a work entitled *Levana*; distinguished by keen practical sagacity, as well as generous sentiment, and a certain sober magnificence of speculation; the whole presented in that singular style which characterizes the man. Germany is rich in works on Education; richer at present than any other country: it is there only that some echo of the Lockes and Miltons, speaking of this high matter, may still be heard; and speaking of it in the language of our own time; with insight into the actual wants, advantages, perils, and prospects of this age. Among writers on this subject, Richter holds a high place; if we look chiefly at his tendency and aims, perhaps the highest.—The *Clavis Fichtiana* is a ludicrous performance, known to us only by report; but Richter is said to possess the merit, while he laughs at Fichte, of understanding him; a merit among Fichte's critics which seems to be one of the rarest. Report also, we regret to say, is all that we know of the *Campaner Thal*, a Discourse on the Immortality of the Soul; one of Richter's beloved topics, or rather the life of his whole philosophy, glimpses of which look forth on us from almost every one of his writings. He died while engaged, under recent and almost total blindness, in enlarging and remodelling this *Campaner Thal*: the unfinished manuscript was borne upon his coffin to the burial vault; and Klopstock's hymn, *Auferstehen wirst du*, 'Thou shalt arise, my soul,' can seldom have been sung with more appropriate application than over the grave of Jean Paul.

We defy the most careless or prejudiced reader to peruse these works without an impression of something splendid, wonderful, and daring. But they require to be studied as well as read, and this with no ordinary patience, if the reader, especially the foreign reader, wishes to comprehend rightly either their truth or their want of truth. Tried by many an accepted standard, Richter would be speedily enough disposed of; pronounced a mystic—a German dreamer—a rash and presumptuous innovator; and so consigned, with equanimity, perhaps with a certain jubilee, to the Limbo appointed for all such wind bags and deceptions. Originality is a thing we constantly clamour for, and constantly quarrel with; as if, observes our author himself, any originality but our own could be expected to content us! In fact, all strange things are apt, without fault of theirs, to estrange us at first view, and unhappily scarcely anything is perfectly plain, but what is also perfectly common. The current coin of the realm passes into all hands; and be it gold, silver, or copper, is acceptable and of known value: but with new ingots, with foreign bars, and medals of Corinthian brass, the case is widely different.

There are few writers with whom deliberation and careful distrust of first impressions are more necessary than with Richter. He is a phenomenon from the very surface; he presents himself with a professed and determined singularity; his language itself is a stone of stumbling to the critic; to critics of the grammarian species, an unpardonable, often an insuperable, rock of offence. Not that he is ignorant of gram-

mar, or disdains the sciences of spelling and parsing ; but he exercises both in a certain latitudinarian spirit ; deals with astonishing liberality in parentheses, dashes, and subsidiary clauses ; invents hundreds of new words, alters old ones, or, by hyphen, chains, pairs, and packs them together into most jarring combination ; in short, produces sentences of the most heterogeneous, lumbering, interminable kind. Figures without limit, indeed the whole is one tissue of metaphors, and similes, and allusions to all the provinces of Earth, Sea, and Air ; interlaced with epigrammatic breaks, vehement bursts, or sardonic turns, interjections, quips, puns, and even oaths ! A perfect Indian jungle it seems ; a boundless, unparalleled imbroglio ; nothing on all sides but darkness, dissonance, confusion worse confounded ! Then the style of the whole corresponds, in perplexity and extravagance, with that of the parts. Every work, be it fiction or serious treatise, is embaled in some fantastic wrappage ; some mad narrative accounting for its appearance, and connecting it with the author, who generally becomes a person of the drama himself, before all is over. He has a whole imaginary geography of Europe in his novels ; the cities of Flachsenfingen, Haarhaar, Scheerau, and so forth, with their princes, and privy-councillors, and serene highnesses ; most of whom, odd enough fellows every way, are Richter's private acquaintances, talk with him of state matters (in the purest Tory dialect), and often incite him to get on with his writing. No story proceeds without the most erratic digressions and voluminous tagrags rolling after it in many a snaky twine. Ever and anon there occurs some 'Extra-leaf,' with its satirical petition, program, or other wonderful intercalation, no mortal can foresee on what. It is, indeed, a mighty maze ; and often the panting reader toils after him in vain, or, baffled and spent, indignantly stops short, and retires, perhaps for ever.

All this, we must admit, is true of Richter ; but much more is true also. Let us not turn from him after the first cursory glance, and imagine we have settled his account by the words Rhapsody and Affectation. They are cheap words, we allow, and of sovereign potency ; we should see therefore that they be not rashly applied. Many things in Richter accord ill with such a theory. There are rays of the keenest truth, nay, steady pillars of scientific light rising through this chaos : Is it in fact a chaos, or may it be that our eyes are not of infinite vision, and have only missed the plan ? Few rhapsodists are men of science, of solid learning, of rigorous study, and accurate, extensive, nay, universal knowledge ; as he is. With regard to affectation also, there is much to be said. The essence of affectation is that it be *assumed* : the character is, as it were, forcibly crushed into some foreign mould, in the hope of being thereby reshaped and beautified ; the unhappy man persuades himself that he is in truth a new and wonderfully engaging creature, and so he moves about with a conscious air, though every movement betrays not symmetry, but dislocation. This it is to be affected, to walk in a vain show. But the strangeness alone is no proof of the vanity. Many men that move smoothly in the old-established railways of custom will be found to have their affectation ; and perhaps here and there some divergent genius be accused of it unjustly. The *show*, though common, may not cease to be *vain* ; nor become so for being uncommon. Before we censure a man for seeming what he is not, we should be sure that we know what he *is*. As to Richter in particular, we think it but fair to observe, that, strange and

tumultuous as he is, there is a certain benign composure visible in his writings ; a mercy, a gladness, a reverence, united in such harmony, as we cannot but think bespeaks not a false but a genuine state of mind ; not a feverish and morbid, but a healthy and robust state.

The secret of the matter, perhaps, is, that Richter requires more study than most readers care to give ; for as we approach more closely, many things grow clearer. In the man's own sphere there is consistency ; the farther we advance into it, we see confusion more and more unfold itself into order ; till at last, viewed from its proper centre, his intellectual universe, no longer a distorted, incoherent series of air-landscapes, coalesces into compact expansion ; a vast, magnificent, and variegated scene ; full, indeed, of wondrous products, and rude, it may be, and irregular ; but gorgeous, and varied, and ample ; gay with the richest verdure and foliage, and glittering in the brightest and kindest sun.

Richter has been called an intellectual Colossus ; and in truth it is still somewhat in this light that we view him. His faculties are all of gigantic mould ; cumbrous, awkward in their movements ; large and splendid rather than harmonious or beautiful ; yet joined in living union,—and of force and compass altogether extraordinary. He has an intellect vehement, rugged, irresistible ; crushing in pieces the hardest problems ; piercing into the most hidden combinations of things, and grasping the most distant : an imagination vague, sombre, splendid, or appalling ; brooding over the abysses of Being ; wandering through Infinitude, and summoning before us, in its dim religious light, shapes of brilliancy, solemnity, or terror : a fancy of exuberance literally unexampled ; for it pours its treasures with a lavishness which knows no limit, hanging, like the sun, a jewel on every grass-blade, and sowing the earth at large with orient pearl. But deeper than all these lies Humour, the ruling quality with Richter ; as it were the central fire that pervades and vivifies his whole being. He is a humourist from his inmost soul ; he thinks as a humourist, he feels, imagines, acts as a humourist : Sport is the element in which his nature lives and works. A tumultuous element for such a nature, and wild work he makes in it ! A Titan in his sport as in his earnestness, he oversteps all bound, and riots without law or measure. He heaps Pelion upon Ossa, and hurls the universe together and asunder like a case of playthings. The Moon ‘bombards’ the Earth, being a rebellious satellite ; Mars ‘preaches’ to the other Planets very singular doctrine ; nay, we have Time and Space themselves playing fantastic tricks : it is an infinite masquerade ; all Nature is gone forth mumming in the strangest guises.

Yet the anarchy is not without its purpose ; these vizards are not mere hollow masks ; but there are living faces beneath them, and this mumming has its significance. Richter is a man of mirth, but he seldom or never condescends to be a merry-andrew. Nay, in spite of its extravagance, we should say that his humour is of all his gifts intrinsically the finest and most genuine. It has such witching turns ; there is something in it so capricious, so quaint, so heartfelt. From his Cyclopean workshop, and its fuliginous limbecs, and huge unwieldy machinery, the little shrivelled twisted figure comes forth at last, so perfect and so living, to be for ever laughed at and for ever loved ! Wayward as he seems, he works not without forethought : like Rubens, by a single stroke, he can change a laughing face into a sad one. But in

his smile itself a touching pathos may lie hidden, a pity too deep for tears. He is a man of feeling, in the noblest sense of that word; for he loves all living with the heart of a brother; his soul rushes forth, in sympathy with gladness or sorrow, with goodness or grandeur, over all creation. Every gentle and generous affection, every thrill of mercy, every glow of nobleness, awakens in his bosom a response, nay, strikes his spirit into harmony; a wild music as of wind-harps, floating round us in fitful swells, but soft sometimes, and pure and soul-entrancing as the song of angels! Aversion itself with him is not hatred: he despises much, but justly, with tolerance also, with placidity, and even a sort of love. Love, in fact, is the atmosphere he breathes in, the medium through which he looks: his is the spirit which gives life and beauty to whatever it embraces. Inanimate Nature itself is no longer an insensible assemblage of colours and perfumes, but a mysterious Presence, with which he communes in unutterable sympathies. We might call him, as he once called Herder, ‘a Priest of Nature, a mild Bramin,’ wandering amid spicy groves, and under benignant skies. The infinite Night with her solemn aspects, Day, and the sweet approach of Even and Morn, are full of meaning for him. He loves the green Earth with her streams and forests, her flowery leas and eternal skies; loves her with a sort of passion, in all her vicissitudes of light and shade; his spirit revels in her grandeur and charms; expands like the breeze over wood and lawn, over glade and dingle, stealing and giving odours.

It has sometimes been made a wonder that things so discordant should go together—that men of humour are often likewise men of sensibility. But the wonder should rather be to see them divided; to find true genial humour dwelling in a mind that was coarse or callous. The essence of humour is sensibility; warm, tender fellow-feeling with all forms of existence. Nay, we may say, that unless seasoned and purified by humour, sensibility is apt to run wild; will readily corrupt into disease, falsehood, or in one word, sentimentality. Witness Rousseau, Zimmerman, in some points also St. Pierre: to say nothing of living instances; or of the Kotzebues, and other pale host of woe-begone mourners, whose wailings, like the howl of an Irish wake, have from time to time cleft the general ear. The last perfection of our faculties, says Schiller, with a truth far deeper than it seems, is, that their activity, without ceasing to be sure and earnest, become *sport*. True humour is sensibility, in the most catholic and deepest sense; but it is this *sport* of sensibility; wholesome and perfect therefore; as it were, the playful teasing fondness of a mother to her child.

That faculty of irony, of caricature, which often passes by the name of humour, but consists chiefly in a certain superficial distortion or reversal of objects, and ends at best in laughter, bears no resemblance to the humour of Richter. A shallow endowment this; and often more a habit than an endowment. It is but a poor fraction of humour; or rather, it is the body to which the soul is wanting; any life it has being false, artificial, and irrational. True humour springs not more from the head than from the heart; it is not contempt; its essence is love; it issues not in laughter, but in still smiles, which lie far deeper. It is a sort of inverse sublimity; exalting, as it were, into our affections what is below us, while sublimity draws down into our affections what is above us. The former is scarcely less precious or heart-affecting than the latter; perhaps it is still rarer, and, as a test of genius, still more decisive. It is, in fact, the bloom and perfume, the purest effluence of

a deep, fine, and loving nature ; a nature in harmony with itself, reconciled to the world and its stintedness and contradiction ; nay, finding in this very contradiction new elements of beauty as well as goodness. Among our own writers, Shakespeare in this, as in all other provinces, must have his place ; yet not the first : his humour is heartfelt, exuberant, warm, but seldom the tenderest or most subtle. Swift inclines more to simple irony ; yet he had genuine humour too, and of no unloving sort, though cased, like Ben Jonson's, in a most bitter and caustic rind. Sterne follows next ; our last specimen of humour, and with all his faults, our best ; our finest, if not our strongest, for *Yorick*, and *Corporal Trim*, and *Uncle Toby*, have yet no brother but in *Don Quixote*, far as he lies above them. Cervantes is indeed the purest of all humourists ; so gentle and genial,—so full, yet so ethereal, is his humour, and in such accordance with itself and his whole noble nature. The Italian mind is said to abound in humour ; yet their classics seem to give us no right emblem of it : except, perhaps, in Ariosto, there appears little in their current poetry that reaches the region of true humour. In France, since the days of Montaigne, it seems to be nearly extinct : Voltaire, much as he dealt in ridicule, never rises into humour ; and even with Moliere, it is far more an affair of the understanding than of the character.

That, in this point, Richter excels all German authors, is saying much for him, and may be said truly. Lessing has humour,—of a sharp, rigid, substantial, and, on the whole, genial sort ; yet the ruling bias of his mind is to logic. So likewise has Wieland, though much diluted by the general *loquacity* of his nature, and impoverished still farther by the influences of a cold, meagre, French scepticism. Among the Ramlers, Gellerts, Hagedorns, of Frederick the Second's time, we find abundance, and delicate in kind too, of that light matter which the French call pleasantry ; but little or nothing that deserves the name of humour. In the present age, however, there is Goethe, with a rich true vein ; and this sublimated, as it were, to an essence, and blended in still union with his whole mind. Tieck also, among his many fine susceptibilities, is not without a warm keen sense for the ridiculous ; and a humour rising, though by short fits, and from a much lower atmosphere, to be poetic. But of all these men, there is none that, in depth, copiousness, and intensity of humour, can be compared with Jean Paul. He alone exists in humour ; lives, moves, and has his being in it. With him it is not so much united to his other qualities, of intellect, fancy, imagination, moral feeling, as these are united to it ; or rather unite themselves to it, and grow under its warmth, as in their proper temperature and climate. Not as if we meant to assert that his humour is in all cases perfectly natural and pure ; nay, that it is not often extravagant, untrue, or even absurd : but still, on the whole, the core and life of it are genuine, subtle, spiritual. Not without reason have his panegyrists named him *Jean Paul der Einzige*—‘Jean Paul the Only :’ in one sense or the other, either as praise or censure, his critics also must adopt this epithet ; for surely in the whole circle of literature we look in vain for his parallel. Unite the sportfulness of Rabelais, and the best sensibility of Sterne, with the earnestness, and, even in slight portions, the sublimity of Milton ; and let the mosaic brain of old Burton give forth the workings of this strange union, with the pen of Jeremy Bentham !

To say how, with so peculiar a natural endowment, Richter should have shaped his mind by culture, is much harder than to say that he has shaped it wrong. Of affectation we will neither altogether clear him, nor very loudly pronounce him guilty. That his manner of writing is singular,—nay, in fact, a wild complicated Arabesque; no one can deny. But the true question is,—how nearly does this manner of writing represent his real manner of thinking and existing? With what degree of freedom does it allow this particular form of being to manifest itself; or what fetters and perversions does it lay on such manifestation? For the great law of culture is: Let each become all that he was created capable of being; expand, if possible, to his full growth; resisting all impediments, casting off all foreign, especially all noxious adhesions; and show himself at length in his own shape and stature, be these what they may. There is no uniform of excellence, either in physical or spiritual nature: all *genuine* things are what they ought to be. The rein-deer is good and beautiful, so likewise is the elephant. In literature it is the same: ‘every man,’ says Lessing, ‘has his own style, like his own nose.’ True, there are noses of wonderful dimensions; but no nose can justly be amputated by the public,—not even the nose of Slawkenbergius himself; so it *be* a real nose, and no wooden one, put on for deception’s sake and mere show.

To speak in grave language, Lessing means, and we agree with him, that the outward style is to be judged of by the inward qualities of the spirit which it is employed to body forth; that without prejudice to critical propriety, well understood, the former may vary into many shapes as the latter varies; that, in short, the grand point for a writer, is not to be of this or that external make and fashion, but in every fashion to be genuine, vigorous, alive—alive with his whole being, consciously, and for beneficent results.

Tried by this test, we imagine Richter’s wild manner will be found less imperfect than many a very tame one. To the man it may not be unsuitable. In that singular form, there is a fire, a splendour, a benign energy, which persuades us into tolerance, nay into love, of much that might otherwise offend. Above all, this man, alloyed with imperfections as he may be, is consistent and coherent: he is at one with himself; he knows his aims, and pursues them in sincerity of heart, joyfully, and with undivided will. A harmonious developement of being, the first and last object of all true culture, has therefore been attained; if not completely, at least more completely than in one of a thousand ordinary men. Nor let us forget, that, in such a nature, it was not of easy attainment; that where much was to be developed, some imperfection should be forgiven. It is true, the beaten paths of literature lead the safest to the goal; and the talent pleases us most which submits to shine with new gracefulness through old forms. Nor is the noblest and most peculiar mind too noble or peculiar for working by prescribed laws: Sophocles, Shakespeare, Cervantes, and, in Richter’s own age, Goethe, how little did they innovate on the given forms of composition, how much in the spirit they breathed into them! All this is true; and Richter must lose of our esteem in proportion. Much, however, will remain; and why should we quarrel with the high, because it is not the highest? Richter’s worst faults are nearly allied to his best merits; being chiefly exuberance of good, irregular squandering of wealth, a dazzling with excess of true light. These things may be pardoned the more readily, as they are little likely to be imitated.

On the whole, Genius has privileges of its own ; it selects an orbit for itself ; and be this never so eccentric, if it is indeed a celestial orbit, we mere star-gazers must at last compose ourselves ; must cease to cavil at it, and begin to observe it, and calculate its laws. That Richter is a new Planet in the intellectual heavens, we dare not affirm ; an atmospheric Meteor he is not wholly ; perhaps a Comet that, though with long aberrations, and shrouded in a nebulous veil, has yet its place in the empyrean.

Of Richter's individual works, of his opinions, his general philosophy of life, we have no room left us to speak. Regarding his novels, we may say, that, except in some few instances, and those chiefly of the shorter class, they are not what, in strict language, we can term unities : with much *callida junctura* of parts, it is rare that any of them leaves on us the impression of a perfect, homogeneous, indivisible whole. A true work of art requires to be *fused* in the mind of its creator, and, as it were, poured forth (from his imagination, though not from his pen.) at one simultaneous gush. Richter's works do not always bear sufficient marks of having been in *fusion* ; yet neither are they merely *riveted* together ; to say the least, they have been *welded*. A similar remark applies to many of his characters ; indeed, more or less, to all of them, except such as are entirely humorous, or have a large dash of humour. In this latter province, certainly, he is at home ; a true poet, a maker : his *Siebenkäs*, his *Schmelzle*, even his *Fibel* and *Fixlein*, are living figures. But in heroic personages, passionate, massive, overpowering as he is, we have scarcely ever a complete ideal : art has not attained to the concealment of itself. With his heroines again he is more successful ; they are often true heroines, though perhaps with too little variety of character ; bustling, buxom mothers and housewives. with all the caprices, perversities, and warm generous helpfulness of women ; or white, half-angelic creatures, meek, still, long-suffering, high-minded, of tenderest affections, and hearts crushed yet uncomplaining. Supernatural figures he has not attempted ; and wisely, for he cannot write without belief. Yet many times he exhibits an imagination, of a singularity, nay, on the whole, of a truth and grandeur, unexampled elsewhere. In his *dreams* there is a mystic complexity, a gloom, and amid the dim, gigantic, half ghastly shadows, gleamings of a wizard splendour, which almost recall to us the visions of Ezekiel. By readers who have studied the *Dream in the New-year's Eve*, we shall not be mistaken.

Richter's Philosophy, a matter of no ordinary interest, both as it agrees with the common philosophy of Germany and disagrees with it, must not be touched on for the present. One only observation we shall make : it is not mechanical or sceptical ; it springs not from the forum or the laboratory, but from the depths of the human spirit ; and yields as its fairest product a noble system of Morality, and the firmest conviction of Religion. In this latter point we reckon him peculiarly worthy of study. To a careless reader he might seem the wildest of infidels ; for nothing can exceed the freedom with which he bandies to and fro the dogmas of religion, nay, sometimes the highest objects of Christian reverence. There are passages of this sort which will occur to every reader of Richter ; but which, not to fall into the error we already blamed in Madame de Stael, we shall refrain from quoting. More light is in the following : ' Or,' inquires he, in his usual abrupt way, (Note to *Schmelzle's Journey*,) ' Or are all your Mosques, Epis-

‘ copal Churches, Pagodas, Chapels of Ease, Tabernacles, and Pan-
 ‘ theons, any thing else but the Ethnic Forecourt of the Invisible
 ‘ Temple and its Holy of Holies?’ Yet, independently of all dogmas,
 nay, perhaps in spite of many, Richter is, in the highest sense of the
 word, religious. A reverence, not a self-interested fear, but a noble
 reverence for the spirit of all goodness, forms the crown and glory of
 his culture. The fiery elements of his nature have been purified under
 holy influences, and chastened by a principle of mercy and humility
 into peace and well-doing. An intense and continual faith in man’s
 immortality and native grandeur accompanies him; from amid the vor-
 tices of life, he looks up to a heavenly loadstar; the solution of what is
 visible and transient, he finds in what is invisible and eternal. He has
 doubted, he denies, yet he believes. ‘ When, in your last hour,’ says
 he, (*Levana*, p. 251.) ‘ when, in your last hour, (think of this,) all
 ‘ faculty in the broken spirit shall fade away and die into inanity—
 ‘ imagination, thought, effort, enjoyment,—then at last will the night-
 ‘ flower of Belief alone continue blooming, and refresh with its per-
 ‘ fumes in the last darkness.’

To reconcile these seeming contradictions, to explain the grounds,
 the manner, the congruity of Richter’s belief, cannot be attempted
 here. We recommend him to the study, the tolerance, and even the
 praise, of all men who have inquired into this highest of questions with
 a right spirit; inquired with the martyr fearlessness, but also with the
 martyr reverence, of men that love Truth, and will not accept a lie.
 A frank, fearless, honest, yet truly spiritual faith is of all things the
 rarest in our time.

Of writings which, though with many reservations, we have praised
 so much, our hesitating readers may demand some specimen. To
 unbelievers, unhappily, we have none of a convincing sort to give.
 Ask us not to represent the Peruvian forests by three twigs plucked
 from them; or the cataracts of the Nile by a handful of its water! To
 those, meanwhile, who will look on twigs as mere dissevered twigs, and
 a handful of water as only so many drops, we present the following.
 It is a summer Sunday night; Jean Paul is taking leave of the Huke-
 lum Parson and his wife; like him, we have long laughed at them or
 wept for them; like him also, we are sad to part from them:

‘ We were all of us too deeply moved. We at last tore ourselves
 ‘ asunder from repeated embraces; my friend retired with the soul
 ‘ whom he loves. I remained alone, behind him with the Night.

‘ And I walked without aim through woods, through valleys, and over
 ‘ brooks, and through sleeping villages, to enjoy the great Night, like
 ‘ a Day. I walked, and still looked, like the magnet, to the region of
 ‘ midnight, to strengthen my heart at the gleaming twilight, at this
 ‘ upstretching aurora of a morning beneath our feet. White night
 ‘ butterflies flitted, white blossoms fluttered, white stars fell, and the
 ‘ white snow-powder hung silvery in the high Shadow of the Earth,
 ‘ which reaches beyond the Moon, and which is our Night. Then
 ‘ began the Eolian Harp of the Creation to tremble and to sound,
 ‘ blown on from above; and my immortal Soul was a string in this
 ‘ Harp.—The heart of a brother, everlasting Man, swelled under the
 ‘ everlasting heaven, as the seas swell under the sun and under the
 ‘ moon.—The distant village clocks struck midnight, mingling, as it
 ‘ were, with the ever-pealing tone of ancient Eternity.—The limbs of
 ‘ my buried ones touched cold on my soul, and drove away its blots,

‘ as dead hands heal eruptions of the skin.—I walked silently through
 ‘ little hamlets, and close by their outer church-yards, where crumbled
 ‘ upcast coffin-boards were glimmering, while the once bright eyes that
 ‘ had lain in them were mouldered into grey ashes. Cold thought!
 ‘ clutch not like a cold spectre at my heart: I look up to the starry sky,
 ‘ and an everlasting chain stretches thither, and over, and below; and
 ‘ all is Life, and Warmth, and Light, and all is Godlike or God. . . .

‘ Towards morning, I desired thy late lights, little city of my dwell-
 ‘ ing, which I belong to on this side the grave; I returned to the Earth;
 ‘ and in thy steeples behind the by-advanced great midnight, it struck
 ‘ half past two: about this hour, in 1794, Mars went down in the west,
 ‘ and the Moon rose in the east; and my soul desired, in grief for
 ‘ the noble warlike blood which is still streaming on the blossoms of
 ‘ Spring: Ah, retire, bloody War, like red Mars; and thou, still Peace,
 ‘ come forth like the mild divided Moon!’—End of *Quintus Fixlein*.

Such, seen through no uncoloured medium, but in dim remoteness, and sketched in hurried, transitory outline, are some features of Jean Paul Friedrich Richter and his works. Germany has long loved him; to England also he must one day become known; for a man of this magnitude belongs not to one people, but to the world. What our countrymen may decide of him, still more what may be his fortune with posterity, we will not try to foretell. Time has a contracting influence on many a wide-spread fame; yet of Richter we will say, that he may survive much. There is in him that which does not die; that Beauty and Earnestness of soul, that spirit of Humanity, of Love, and mild Wisdom, over which the vicissitudes of mode have no sway. This is that excellence of the inmost nature which alone confers immortality on writings; that charm which still, under every defacement, binds us to the pages of our own Hookers, and Taylors, and Brownes, when their way of thought has long ceased to be ours, and the most valued of their merely intellectual opinions have passed away, as ours too must do, with the circumstances and events in which they took their shape or rise. To men of a right mind, there may long be in Richter much that has attraction and value. In the moral desert of vulgar Literature, with its sandy wastes, and parched, bitter, and too often poisonous shrubs, the writings of this man will rise in their irregular luxuriance, like a cluster of date-trees, with its greensward and well of water, to refresh the pilgrim, in the sultry solitude, with nourishment and shade.

SCHILLER AND GOETHE.*

It is so difficult a matter, in general, to get at the truth with regard to literary men, and particularly those who have long occupied a prominent position in the eyes of the public, that any authentic contributions to the history of their minds must be received with satisfaction, though mingled with much that is but of trifling or doubtful interest.

* Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe, in den Jahren, 1794 bis 1805. (Correspondence between Schiller and Goethe, from 1794 to 1805.) 6 vols. 8vo. Stuttgart und Tübingen. 1829.—Vol. liii. page 82. March, 1831.

Biographies, written by third parties, must always be but unsatisfactory. The outward actions may be described; though, even as to these, the picture must often be distorted by erroneous or defective information, or discoloured by the peculiar feelings, opinions, and prejudices of the biographer; but the inward man himself, his moral and intellectual organization, can be but feebly, if at all, indicated to our view. Auto-biographies, again, though not liable to these objections, are, in general, but apologies for the particular views or conduct of the writer. They may be undertaken in the spirit of sincerity; Truth may at first hold the pen; but, somehow or other, Vanity soon contrives to wrest it out of her hand, and to write down whatever Self-love, sitting concealed behind, is pleased to dictate. But this objection does not apply to familiar letters, written with no eye to publication, in which, though the writer is truly painting his own character, he does it unconsciously; and where the scattered strokes which he has traced first assume significance and meaning, when they are all collected and combined—perhaps after death has for ever put a stop to the chance of their being retouched or altered by the hand by which they were originally drawn.

Such, we think, will be found to be the case with the Letters of Schiller and Goethe. Many of them, it is true, might have been omitted entirely, with advantage to the interest of the collection; others are full of details, which, if interesting at all, can only be so from the character of the men to whom they relate. Commissions for the purchase of carpets—presents of biscuit—dissertations on fine paper copies, and coarse paper copies—and covers for periodicals, ‘white, black, and grey, with all their trumpery’—thoughts on colds and meazles, rheumatism, and the other ills which poor Schiller, in particular, was heir to—these, and many other such matters of no special moment, must be put up with, because the very homeliness and familiarity of these details are our guarantee for the confidential sincerity of the rest. But with these are intermingled acute and profound observations on literature and life—free and eloquent speculation on philosophical opinions—many lights as to the origin and progress of their respective literary enterprises—their habits of study and composition—their hopes and fears as to the great and stormy events, the moral and political revolutions which were passing around them—their views, on some points, harmonizing,—in others, standing opposed to each other, in strong contrast, both in their substance and in the manner in which they are advocated and illustrated. Schiller writes with the earnestness, the logical sequence, and amplitude of one who arrives at his conclusions by patient progressive investigation. He cannot discuss his subject in a sentence, or content himself with a hint or shadow of his meaning. Goethe, on the contrary, leaps lightly from one point of his argument to another, and reaches his mark with rapidity: more comprehensive in his views, more diffusive in his sympathies, he has more subjects that interest him, and less time to bestow on any one in particular; more tempered in his feelings, he is often calm and composed where his friend was all fire and vehemence. The one writes with a stoical energy, the other with an almost epicurean tranquillity.

We have said *almost*, for it would be injustice to Goethe to assimilate him even to the best of that sect to which we have alluded. At the time when he was first brought into contact with Schiller, his opinions, literary and moral, might be considered as pretty completely formed; some modification may since have been made, but the grand outlines

continue the same. Already the fabric of his mind displayed that singular symmetry and harmony of parts, which, as when we look at St. Peter's, makes us for a moment forget its vastness. The colossal and conflicting masses which had at first seemed to lie about, without connexion, had all, by culture and discipline, been built up, and fused together with a compactness and felicity of adjustment, of which literary history scarcely affords a parallel: noiselessly and rapidly it had risen, almost like an exhalation, and already stood proudly eminent amidst the edifices which surrounded it.

But though the progress of Goethe's intellectual fabric had scarcely been marked, the change had indeed been almost a total one. Like most profound thinkers, he had had his share of the doubts, the gloomy despairing feelings, the thoughts that for a time wander through eternity, only to be driven back again to the realities of life, and of the despondency which the prospect of the world, with its many mysteries and contradictions, must excite in every mind which does not repose in confidence upon revealed religion, and the solution which it affords, or promises, of the perplexities of existence. The ideas thus fermenting in his mind, were brought to a height by the sudden death of his friend, Jerusalem: like water long on the point of freezing, they sprang into solidity by a touch, and *Werther* was the result; and all Germany was for a time overrun with insane pictures of sceptical gloom, and new editions of the 'Miseries of Human Life.'

But in healthy and vigorous minds, this state of feeling, though perhaps, like some of those disorders to which our bodily frame is subjected, it may even be useful in the ultimate formation of the constitution, cannot last long. The path which at first led us into darkness, if steadily pursued, guides us back again to the day. We soon come to perceive, that if life has many evils, it has also many comforts; that it is better to bear, and, where we can, to alleviate those evils, than to whine over them; nay, that in activity, moral and intellectual, a remedy may be found for many of those which appeared most formidable; that if joy be transient, misery is not immortal; if crime and selfishness too often sadden our hopes, some trait of self-devotion, some emanation of that benevolence which makes the whole world akin, ever and anon occurs to revive our confidence, and to remind us that man is not entirely of the earth, earthy.

These considerations are forced upon us by our intercourse with our fellow-men; nor was it possible that they could long escape the observation of Goethe, in whom the reflective powers were as conspicuously developed from the first, as his imaginative faculties, and in whom good health, and natural cheerfulness, were combined. Accordingly, the very utterance of his complaints through the mouth of Werther seemed to have allayed his disorder; he had raved himself to rest; and while his countrymen were still enveloped in the tempest he had raised, and tossing in their cockboats on a sea of doubt, with the thick shadow of night overhead, he, the author of the storm, had worked his way through, and was looking quietly back upon the vexed ocean, with the firm ground of reason beneath his feet, and the guiding lights of Hope and Faith appearing to him again through a thousand openings in that still troubled but fast clearing sky.

It is not often that men escape thus unhurt from these moral storms. They generally leave some part of their stores behind them in their retreat. A man like Voltaire, for instance, attains tranquillity, or an

appearance of tranquillity, by banishing passion, and extracting from the enigma of human life nothing but materials for wit and sarcasm. His sympathy with the great and good, he throws behind him for ever, as a useless incumbrance. The man whose better feelings, and stronger faith, protect him from this unsatisfactory and hollow resource, too often forgets the practical in the visionary, and, absorbing himself in cloudy reveries, loses his sympathy with human life as it is, with its real interests and duties, and, of course, loses his hold on the feelings and sympathies of his fellow-men. But Goethe emerges from the limbo of doubt, without bating a jot or scruple of his varied gifts. He does not throw his wit overboard, in order to save his pathos; nor make shipwreck of his feeling, nor attempt to lighten his bark by getting rid of the heavy ballast of philosophy. Quietly and steadily he steers through all; he only keeps a firmer hold of the helm, and restores the equilibrium of his vessel, by balancing his antagonist forces against each other. He lands his whole freight in safety, and forthwith rebuilds his intellectual home from those varied stores, laying its foundations deep in the spirit of reverence, cementing its broad and massive front by the bands of reason, and gilding its airy and glittering pinnacles with the sunshine of wit and graceful humour. It is the Holy Alliance of the head and heart, in which neither compromises its independence, but each supports, and relieves, and elevates the other.

A change in a man's speculative views soon gives a corresponding tone to his writings, unless he be a mere imitator, who only reproduces the ideas of others, instead of drawing from his own stores of intellect and feeling. As society and nature present themselves to our view, so they are reflected back;—harmonious and consistent, from the well-regulated mind,—faint and wavering, from the vacillating,—perplexed and perplexing, from the disordered. The cheerful heart paints the world as it finds it, like a sunny landscape; the morbid mind depicts it like a sterile wilderness, palled with thick vapours, and dark as the valley of the shadow of death. It is the mirror, in short, on which it is caught, which lends to the face of nature the aspect of its own turbulence or tranquillity.

The softened spirit and calm extension of view which had opened upon Goethe's mind could not fail shortly to manifest its influence in his theories of art and composition. The clamorous energy of Werther, his vain struggles against the rules of society, his angry questioning with his fate, no longer suit with his more tempered views; nay, at these stormy ejaculations he is now almost tempted to smile, if he can be moved to smile at any thing. Even a rude sketch of the reality of chivalrous life, like Goetz, now appears to him exaggerated—not perhaps exaggerated or untrue in itself, but unsuited to the purposes of art, which seeks to paint life as a whole,—not in fragments, but in its spirit and essence, and therefore is not satisfied with the partial and local, but aspires after general or universal truth. We may take a single captive with Sterne, shut him up in his dungeon, and 'send our hearers weeping to their beds' with the stern and iron truth of the picture; but then it is not a true picture of life as a whole,—of that life whose joy and sorrow, crime and virtue, meanness and magnificence, jostle each other, and which, in its enlarged significance and moral meaning, can only be indicated by a work the spirit of which is varied, and tempered, and comprehensive as its own. Hence in these productions which characterise the second era of Goethe's apprenticeship,

the first thing that strikes us (and at first unquestionably with rather a disappointed feeling) is the absence of all scenes of strong passion ;—when our feelings, sympathizing with the tale, are yielding themselves to his spell, he suddenly, and with apparent caprice, leaves the point, and shoots off into some devious alley, into which we follow him at first with reluctance, till, without knowing how, we feel ourselves again absorbed in the new prospects to which he has introduced us. But this is, after all, no capricious diversion, but the practical exposition of that principle, which, considering every great literary composition as in itself a microcosm, thus endeavours to imitate the ever shifting variety of life, and, passing with a light touch over all the chords of feeling, tries to emulate its harmony, and to leave on the mind that resignation and tranquillity which arises from the comprehensive view of the present condition and future destiny of man. Thus, tranquillity is the grand feature of Goethe's matured works ; passion is always presented to us in its wane, rather than in its crisis ; nothing engrosses, nothing overpowers : his sunshines, dimmed with a gentle haze, and fading away into transparent shade, come mellowed and refreshing upon the eye ;—while, stealing in upon the darkest spots in the bosom of night, we can trace the glimmering light and ' golden exhalations of the dawn.'

Schiller presents himself in some points in strong contrast to his friend. Many things had concurred to retard in him the growth of this moral serenity, or, as it might appear to many, indifference ;—to confine his sympathies to a narrower channel, and permanently to incline the balance of his mind towards solemnity and earnestness. He had suffered much from poverty, something also from political persecution ; while illness, adding the evil of physical pain to other sources of discomfort, saddened, though it could not suppress, his activity of mind. Agitated, like Goethe, at an early stage of his history, with the same restless and gloomy spirit of enquiry and discontent with the world around him, he had given vent to his complaints and his doubts with the same exaggeration, in his *Robbers* and his *Letters of Julius and Raphael*. From this comfortless condition he too had emerged, but not with the same integrity of all his faculties, or with all his wealth so unharmed about him. Some portions of it are damaged ; his sympathy with the lighter spirit of life is damped for ever ; nor will those stores which he has saved cohere with the same compactness and cordial union as in the case of Goethe. Goethe, with the world smiling about him, with renewed health and constant activity, is open to all its influences, and, without leaving the field of reality, can oppose its light and ludicrous combinations as a counterpoise to its griefs and evils. But Schiller, to whom these views present themselves more rarely, and sicklied over with the cast of his own melancholy, must draw his topics of consolation, not so much from the actual as the future, by letting loose his imagination upon the ideal, and by exalting, spiritualizing, and deepening the emotions with which in real life we are familiar. But, ever and anon, the spirit of deep reflection, the old Adam of metaphysical enquiry which had spoken in the mouth of Charles and Julius, comes over him ; and the airy creations of the fancy, arrested in mid air, and suddenly subjected to a strict analysis beneath the cold grey light of philosophy, fade away into unsubstantial things. Instead of cordially uniting, the reason and the imagination, like Varro and Æmilius in the campaign against Hannibal, take the command on alternate days, and divided counsels, and inconsistent and wavering

execution, are too often the natural result. When he writes history, the poet is but too visible; when he writes poetry, the dramatist is often lost in the political or ethical philosopher. Shut out too, as it were, by the effects of illness, from any sympathy with gayety, he had also applied himself with less diligence to the acquisition of general knowledge, and his thoughts moved in a narrower tract. None knew all this better than Schiller himself, nor better appreciated the extent of that gulf which divided his views on these subjects from those of his friend.

‘Do not expect in me,’ says he, in one of his first letters, (August 1794,) ‘any very great actual wealth of ideas,—for this I must look to you. My need and endeavour is, to make much out of little; and when you are better acquainted with my poverty in all which is called acquired knowledge, you will probably think that I have on the whole succeeded in doing so pretty well. From the smallness of my circle of ideas, I move over it the quicker and the oftener, make a better use of my little means, and attain in the form that multiplicity and variety which is wanting in the subject. You labour to simplify your mighty world of ideas; I seek variety for my little possessions. You have to govern a whole kingdom; I only a tolerably respectable family of ideas, which I would gladly increase and multiply to a little world. Your mind works by intuition to an extraordinary degree, and all your thinking powers appear to have chosen the imagination as their common representative. In truth, this is the highest that man can attain, as soon as he has succeeded in generalizing his views and making his sentiments legislative. This has been your aim, and how completely have you succeeded! My understanding works far more by symbols, and thus I float, like a hermaphrodite, between conception and perception, between rule and sentiment, technicality and genius. This it is which, particularly in my earlier years, gave me so awkward an air, both in the field of speculation and poetry; for poetry took me by surprise when I should have philosophized, and philosophy when I should have been poetical. And even now it happens often enough, that imagination destroys my abstractions, and cold understanding my verse. Oh! if I could only become so far master of both powers that I could with freedom assign bounds to each, my lot would be enviable; but, alas! now when I first begin to know and to use my moral strength, disease threatens to undermine my physical powers.’

Though Schiller speaks thus disparagingly of his own genius, compared with that of his rival, in whom he seemed to consider all the mental powers as blended in the most desirable proportions, and with the most intimate union, it is not difficult to see that his own views, as embodied in his works, were likely to be at least as popular as the more refined and subtle views of Goethe. Both are idealists; but the ideal of the one consists in repose arising from variety and quick succession of emotions, none of which are allowed to become predominant or lasting; that of the other in the entire banishment or sequestration of some classes of ideas, and the refining or rendering more intense those which remain to be developed. We are not here to enter upon the question as to the comparative truth of these views (that would be a matter by no means to be discussed in a few pages); but it is obvious that the latter is the one most likely to be understood and appreciated by the great class to whom poetry must be directed.

The first, it requires an effort to understand and to sympathize with; we must seek in it an esoteric purpose beyond the mere interest arising from the events delineated; and, after all, it cannot be denied, that the effect is as often shadowy and theatrical as profound, and that the whole hangs too much in the same metaphorical atmosphere as the types and figures of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Accordingly, such was very much the feeling with which Goethe's '*Pilgrimage*,' his *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, was received; and even now we suspect that, by the mass of readers, it is praised more because it bears the name of Goethe, than from any great sympathy with the views upon which it appears to be constructed.

Schiller's actual views of composition, whatever might be his admiration for Goethe's theoretically, were far more popular. He who ran might read them. They were only a transcript of the emotions, feelings, and passions of life — somewhat purified and exalted, and heightened a little with the colours of poetry, but clothed in no masquerade garb, nor shorn of any of their force, nor exhibited in any elaborate sequence and contrast to suit some particular view; — a section, in short, from life, instead of a philosophical epitome of its leading features. He moved the mind, and strong emotion is always pleasure; he appealed to the best sympathies of our nature, and his energetic appeal is rarely unanswered: and if, in one sense, less wisdom is embodied in them, if his lessons are less adapted to all circumstances, it can hardly be denied that they are given with more energy and distinctness. Even the comparative limitation of the subjects with which he was conversant was in one sense favourable to his purpose; for Goethe seems too often to start from his subject, to hover for a time over some of the collateral topics in all of which his mind was interested, while Schiller moves straight forward, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, and though embarrassed a little by the Kantian trappings which he wore for a time, gaining his mark at last with unerring certainty.

MISS EDGEWORTH.*

MISS EDGEWORTH belongs to a class of writers who are less liable to failures than most of those who adventure in the public pursuit of excellence or distinction. Her works are not happy effusions of fancy, or casual inspirations of genius. There is nothing capricious or accidental about them; but they are the mature and seasonable fruits of those faculties that work the surest and continue the longest in vigour, — of powerful sense and nice moral perception, joined to a rare and invaluable talent for the observation and display of human character, — tempered, in its wholesome exercise, with far more indulgence to its less glittering qualities than usually falls to the lot of those who are gifted with so quick a sense of its weakness and folly. Fortunately for mankind, these are the least precarious as well as the most important of all the faculties which belong to our frail nature; and are not

* Vol. xxviii. page 390. August, 1817.

only for the most part at the command of their possessor, but can seldom be called into action without diffusing their beneficial influence to others.

But though Miss Edgeworth can never absolutely fail in her endeavours to excel, because she can never be either silly or absurd, it does not follow that she should always be equally successful, or that all her productions should be interesting and amusing alike. Sometimes the subjects afford but little scope either for interest or amusement;— and sometimes the moral lessons she wishes to inculcate are of a sort which do not admit of those embellishments which are most suited to her genius.

The key, indeed, to all that is peculiar in her writings, whether in the way of excellence or defect,—that which distinguishes her from other writers of kindred powers of judgment and invention, is, that the duties of a *Moral Teacher* are always uppermost in her thoughts. It is impossible, we think, to read ten pages in any of her writings, without feeling, not only that the whole, but that every part of them, was intended to do good;— and that she has never for an instant allowed herself to forget, that the great end and aim of her writing was—not to display her own talents, or to court popularity by brilliant effect,—but to make her readers substantially better and happier;—not only to correct fatal errors of opinion—to soften dispositions and remove prejudices unfriendly to happiness—but to display wisdom and goodness at once in their most engaging and familiar aspects—to raise to their proper rank and importance those humbler virtues on which the felicity of ordinary life so essentially depends—and to show how easy and agreeable the loftiest principles and the highest intellectual attainments may be in practice, by representing them, as they are in truth most commonly to be found, united with the gayest temper, and the most simple and amiable manners.

No nobler or more worthy end certainly could be proposed to any human endeavours; and those who are best acquainted with Miss Edgeworth's writings will probably think most highly of her success in the pursuit of it: and yet it is to the unrelaxed intensity of this pursuit that we think almost all her faults are to be referred. It is this which has given to her compositions something of too didactic a manner,—and brought the moral of her stories too obtrusively forward,—and led her into repetitions that are somewhat wearisome, and discussions too elementary, and exaggerations too improbable,—that has lowered the tone, in short, of her infinitely varied and original fictions to some affinity with that of ingenious apologues invented for the instruction of youth, and given at times an air of childishness and poorness to the result of the finest observations, and the profoundest views of human nature. It is wonderful, indeed, to see such works produced, under the disadvantages and restraints of so severe a method. But it is impossible to doubt that much of the freedom, the grace, and the boldness of her invention has been sacrificed to the pithy illustration of some moral aphorism, or the importunate enforcement of some salutary truth.

Nor has the effect been merely to lessen the fame of the author, and the delight of her intelligent readers;—we suspect it has, in many cases, been also to defeat, in a considerable degree, the very end to which so much has been thus resolutely sacrificed. Persons of full age revolt from instruction presented in too direct and officious a form,—

and take it amiss to have a plain lesson, however much needed, driven into them in so persevering and unrelenting a manner; and the very exaggerations and repetitions which are intended to give force and effect to the warning, are apt to make it less impressive, by making it less probable. As they now stand, the greater part of her Tales may be regarded as a series or climax of instances, in which some moral or intellectual defect produces disastrous consequences — a continued succession of catastrophes, arising out of the same causes, and terminating in the same general results. In each of these stories, we have little more than an enlargement of a character conceived like one of La Bruyere's, — and illustrated by a similar train of extreme cases and striking exemplifications; — a method perfectly unexceptionable, when the object is merely to give a strong and distinct impression of the character itself, but liable to great objection when applied to a series of adventures that are meant to be probable, and to produce their moral effect by the suggestion of truth and reality. Some of the Tales, indeed, involve this defect, if it be one, in their very structure and conception — and announce it plainly enough in the titles which they bear. The best of these is that entitled 'To morrow;' — the worst, 'Murad the Unlucky.' But in all which aim at a more extended delineation of life and manners, this limitation of the interest is both unnatural and unwise. No long series of interesting occurrences ever turned in reality upon one vice or folly, or presented us with one flaw of character as the spring and origin of all the disasters that ensue. Nor are the moral lessons, of which such occurrences may be made the vehicle, at all more likely to be effectual, from this exclusive attention to one only of the morbid propensities, of which we may be thus agreeably admonished. The systematic teacher of ethics may find it convenient to take the vices and virtues successively and apart, and to treat of each in its order — just as the systematic teacher of grammar takes the prepositions and conjunctions. But as, when the scholar is advanced into *practice*, all the parts of speech are jumbled again together, as in ordinary discourse; so, when the object is to give practical impressions, with a view to real life, it would seem expedient to exhibit all the mingled principles of action that are found actually to govern human conduct, or to affect human felicity: — and the most useful tale for improvement, as well as the most agreeable for unimproveable readers, must be that which presents us with the greatest variety of characters, and places before us the consequences of the greatest number of peculiar propensities. Upon Miss E's present system, there are several of her stories which can be of use, we should think, but to a very small number of patients; and we really cannot help thinking that it was as little worth her while to provide a corrective for gentlemen who have an antipathy to Jews, or ladies who have prejudices against French governesses, as it would be for an eminent physician to compound an infallible plaster for scratches on the first joint of the little finger exclusively.

Her excessive care for the moral utility of her works, has also injured them in another way. The substantial happiness of life, no doubt, depends more upon justice and prudence, than upon genius and generosity — upon ordinary and attainable qualities, in short, than on lofty and heroic ones. But the interest we take in these, as observers, is just in an opposite proportion; and Miss Edgeworth has been so fearful of misleading her readers into any unprofitable or dangerous

admiration, that she has almost entirely excluded the agency of the higher passions, and applied all the resources of her genius to recommend the humbler practices of fair dealing and sincerity—industry, good temper, firmness of character, and friendly offices. She has accordingly recommended them most powerfully; and this age and the next are largely indebted to her exertions, and will long profit by their effects;—but her writings would, beyond all question, have been more attractive if she had dealt occasionally in deeper and more tumultuous emotions, and exhibited her characters in situations more full of distress and agitation, and under the influence of feelings more vehement and overwhelming than she has generally thought it safe to meddle with. Except in the case of her Irish rustics, she has hardly ever ascribed any burst of natural passion, or any impulse of reckless generosity, to her characters. The rest of her favourites are all well-behaved, considerate, good-natured people, who are never in any very terrible danger, either from within or from without, and from whom little more is required than might be expected from any other well-disposed and well-educated persons in the like circumstances.

The greater interest and attraction of stronger passion cannot, of course, be disputed; but we are a little sceptical here also, as to the supposed danger or inutility of such exhibitions. It is a great thing, certainly, to make a man wise for himself; but it is still greater, and not less important, to make him understand that there are feelings stronger than selfish feelings, and joys of more value than selfish enjoyments. One half of mankind is condemned to perpetual debasement, by never having been made to comprehend the delight of generosity, or the elevation of a devoted affection; and, to give them this sense, we must, in general, set before them some strong and even exaggerated representation of the reality. The occasions for such emotions are but of rare occurrence, indeed, in ordinary life; and the habits of mind that would render them common, would no doubt be pernicious if they were to become predominant. But there is no great danger of this practical result. Pupils in this, as in every other school, always lag behind their teachers, and fall far short of their patterns. A dancing-master turns out his toes more than enough, and holds himself ridiculously erect, that his disciples may do both moderately;—and examples of extravagant generosity, or imprudent affection, are likely to be imitated with the same abatements. It may often be necessary, by a strong impulse, to rouse the kinder and nobler feelings of our nature; but it can scarcely ever be requisite to suggest those selfish considerations by which they may be kept within bounds. In spite of our metaphysical moralists, we are firmly persuaded that our hearts are practically softened by being made to sympathize even with imaginary sorrow; and cannot help thinking, that the first tears which a pathetic and powerful writer draws from a rude nature, are pledges of its permanent refinement. The occasional appearance of lofty and energetic characters on the scenes of real life, is allowed to raise the general standard of sentiment in the age and nation to which they belong, even though they should trespass in many points upon the ordinary rules of prudence and morality, and present an assemblage of qualities which it would be by no means convenient to meet in our common acquaintance. Now, the heroes of fiction stand nearly in the same predicament, and perform nearly the same functions for their reader; and we are inclined to think, that the mischief they may do by the seducing

example of their extravagance, is more than compensated by the force with which they rouse our sluggish sensibility, and the feelings they so strongly impress of a nobler use and a higher relish of life than can be found in its vulgar prosperity. In Miss Edgeworth, however, we meet with little that can be called heroic—and nothing that is romantic or poetical. She is so much afraid of seducing her pupils from the practical duties of social life, that she will not even borrow a grace from the loveliness of nature; and has neither expressed herself, nor exemplified in any of her characters, that sympathy with rural beauty, that sense of the expression of the great or majestic features of the universe, of which the author of *Waverley* and the *Antiquary* has made so admirable an use, and turned to such account even for the moral effect of his story. There is more of this feeling in one speech of Edie Ochiltree, than in all the works of the author now before us.

Since we have begun to notice her faults, we may as well make an end of them. Those of which we have now spoken, we ascribe to her system,—her rigid rejection of everything that does not teach a safe and practical moral lesson. There are others which we should be disposed to refer to her sex. With all her sound sense and intelligence, it is plain that she is not at all at home in the representation of public transactions, or the actual business of men. She is not only incapable of dealing with battles and negotiations, like the great author to whom we have just alluded; but has evidently no more than a derivative and conjectural knowledge of the way in which political intrigues, and private and public business, are actually managed. She understands well enough how politicians speak in the drawing-room, and in what way their habits of business affect their manners in society; but her conceptions of the tone and temper of their actual conduct are plainly derived from conjecture alone, and often bear no very near resemblance to the reality. She has an unlucky fondness, too, for showing her acquaintance with the profession of the law, and repeatedly goes out of her way to describe as feats of great legal dexterity and acuteness, things quite puerile or impossible. The influence of sex, too, has narrowed the field of her invention in other particulars,—where this limitation is less perhaps to be regretted;—female Delicacy has prevented her from completing in all their parts those pictures of personal profligacy, and its consequences, which the nature of her moral design leads her so often to portray; and female Gentleness has disabled her from representing, and perhaps from conceiving, the extent of brutal ferocity of which man's nature is capable, and from which, as well as from other vices, it requires not unfrequently to be warned.

It is perhaps invidious to mention other faults,—especially as we have nothing else to ascribe them to but the ordinary imperfections of human nature. But we must venture to tell Miss E., that most of her amiable young ladies are a little too wise and peremptory—and are apt, in their repartees, to be rather pert than dignified. Indeed, we cannot say we exceedingly relish her smart sayings in general,—which are sometimes neither very new nor very elegant. There are also some glaring improbabilities hazarded now and then, to bring about her catastrophes—a fault that is rendered particularly striking by the sober, familiar, and authentic air of most of her narratives. Where the general strain of the fable is romantic and extravagant, a little excess in the marvellous does not startle or offend; but we feel it at

once as a capital defect, where the great charm of the work consists in the truth and accuracy of its representations, and in that chaste and judicious invention which enables us to go along with the story without any violent suppositions, or any great effort of forgetfulness as to the realities of the world we live in.

. Having said so much of the faults of this distinguished writer, it is scarcely necessary perhaps to add, that they are almost entirely effaced by her excellences:—nor, after what we have so often stated with regard to her, can it be requisite to say in what we think these excellences to consist. Her admirable sense—her kindness of heart—her marvellous powers of invention, that make it difficult to discover a single plagiarism, even from herself, in the forty volumes of her works—the inimitable humour, truth, and beauty of her traits of national character, displaying not only a thorough knowledge, but an affectionate love of Ireland, and a concern for her happiness, which cannot be for ever unfruitful—her intimate acquaintance and generous sympathy with the feelings and habits of the lower and middling classes of the people—her clear, indulgent, and rational views of the diversity of human character and its causes—and the rapidity, accuracy, and brevity of her sketches of all its variations;—these are among the most prominent of her merits, and would be alone sufficient to place her among the most meritorious writers of the age she was destined to improve.*

MADAME DE STAËL.†

WHEN we say, that Madame de Staël is decidedly the most eminent literary female of her age, we do not mean to deny that there may be others whose writings are of more direct and indisputable utility—who are distinguished by greater justness and sobriety of thinking, and may pretend to have conferred more practical benefits on the existing generation. But it is impossible, we think, to deny, that she has pursued a

* Miss Edgeworth has reason to feel proud of the honours she has received. Her valuable productions have been impartially reviewed and cordially appreciated by Critics maintaining opposite opinions on almost every other topic connected with Literature and Politics. Her reputation as a woman of commanding talent, extensive information, and sound principles, has escaped those savage and unmanly attacks which some of our literary censors, in the envenomed spirit of party, have levelled at the characters and fame of other female writers not less distinguished for their genius and acquirements. The *Quarterly Review*, notwithstanding its implacable antipathy to *Lady Morgan*, has done ample justice to the merits of Miss Edgeworth. The *critique* on 'Patronage,' in the 20th Number of January 1814, is a just and splendid tribute of praise to one of the most useful and agreeable authors of the age. The Edinburgh Reviewers have, much to their credit, availed themselves of every opportunity of acknowledging the excellence and utility of her works. See Vol. ii. page 398. Vol. iv. page 329. Vol. viii. page 206. Vol. xiv. page 375. Vol. xx. page 100. Vol. xxii. page 416. Vol. xxxiv. page 121. Vol. li. page 447.

† Madame de Staël—*Sur la Literature*.—Vol. xxi. page 1. 1813; and Vol. xxx. page 275. September 1818.

more lofty as well as a more dangerous career ;—that she has treated of subjects of far greater difficulty, and far more extensive interest, and even in her failures has frequently given indication of greater powers than have sufficed for the success of her more prudent contemporaries. While other female writers have contented themselves, for the most part, with embellishing or explaining the truths which the more robust intellect of the other sex had previously established,—in making knowledge more familiar, or virtue more engaging,—or, at most, in multiplying the finer distinctions which may be detected about the boundaries of taste or of morality,—and in illustrating the importance of the minor virtues to the general happiness of life,—this distinguished person has not only aimed at extending the boundaries of knowledge, and rectifying the errors of received opinions upon subjects of the greatest importance, but has uniformly applied herself to trace out the operation of general causes, and by combining the past with the present, and pointing out the connection and reciprocal action of all co-existent phenomena, to develop the harmonious system which actually prevails in the apparent chaos of human affairs ; and to gain something like an assurance as to the complexion of that futurity towards which our thoughts are so anxiously driven, by the selfish as well as the generous principles of our nature.

We are not acquainted, indeed, with any writer who has made such bold and vigorous attempts to carry the generalizing spirit of true philosophy into the history of literature and manners, or who has thrown so strong a light upon the capricious and apparently unaccountable diversity of national taste, genius, and morality, by connecting them with the political structure of society, the accidents of climate and external relation, and the variety of creeds and superstitions. In her lighter works, this spirit is indicated chiefly by the force and comprehensiveness of those general observations with which they abound ; and which strike at once, by their justness and novelty, and by the great extent of their application. They prove also in how remarkable a degree she possesses the rare talent of embodying in one luminous position those sentiments and impressions which float unquestioned and undefined over many an understanding, and give a colour to the character, and a bias to the conduct of multitudes, who are not so much as aware of their existence. Besides all this, her Novels bear testimony to the extraordinary accuracy and minuteness of her observation of human character, and to her thorough knowledge of those dark and secret workings of the heart, by which misery is so often elaborated from the pure elements of the affections. Her knowledge, however, we must say, seems to be more of evil than of good. The predominating sentiment in her fictions is, Despair of human happiness and human virtue ; and their interest is founded almost entirely on the inherent and almost inevitable heartlessness of polished man. The impression which they leave upon the mind, therefore, though powerfully pathetic, is both painful and humiliating ; at the same time that it proceeds, we are inclined to believe, upon the double error of supposing that the bulk of intelligent people are as selfish as those victims of fashion and philosophy from whom her characters are selected ; and that a sensibility to unkindness can survive the extinction of all kindly emotions.

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We cannot stop now to say all that we think of Madame de Staël :—

and yet we must say, that we think her the most powerful writer that her country has produced since the time of Voltaire and Rousseau — and the greatest writer, of a woman, that any time or any country has produced. Her taste, perhaps, is not quite pure; and her style is too irregular and ambitious. These faults may even go deeper. Her passion for *effect*, and the tone of exaggeration which it naturally produces, have probably interfered occasionally with the soundness of her judgment, and given a suspicious colouring to some of her representations of fact. At all events, they have rendered her impatient of the humbler task of completing her explanatory details, or stating in their order all the premises of her reasonings. She gives her history in abstracts, and her theories in aphorisms: — and the greater part of her works, instead of presenting that systematic unity from which the highest degrees of strength and beauty and clearness must ever be derived, may be fairly described as a collection of striking fragments — in which a great deal of repetition does by no means diminish the effect of a good deal of inconsistency. In these same works, however, whether we consider them as fragments or as systems, we do not hesitate to say that there are more original and profound observations — more new images — greater sagacity combined with higher imagination — and more of the true philosophy of the passions, the politics, and the literature of her contemporaries — than in any other author we can now remember. She has great eloquence on all subjects; and a singular pathos in representing those bitterest agonies of the spirit in which wretchedness is aggravated by remorse, or by regrets that partake of its character. Though it is difficult to resist her when she is in earnest, we cannot say that we agree in all her opinions, or approve of all her sentiments. She overrates the importance of Literature, either in determining the character or affecting the happiness of mankind; and she theorizes too confidently on its past and its future history. On subjects like this, we have not yet facts enough for so much philosophy; and must be contented, we fear, for a long time to come, to call many things accidental, which it would be more satisfactory to refer to determinate causes. In her estimate of the happiness, and her notions of the wisdom of private life, we think her both unfortunate and erroneous. She makes passions and high sensibilities a great deal too indispensable; and varnishes over all her pictures too uniformly with the glare of an extravagant or affected enthusiasm. She represents men, in short, as a great deal more unhappy, more depraved, and more energetic than they are — and seems to respect them the more for it. In her politics she is far more unexceptionable. She is everywhere the warm friend and animated advocate of liberty — and of liberal, practical, and philanthropic principles. On these subjects we cannot blame her enthusiasm, which has nothing in it vindictive or provoking; and are far more inclined to envy than to reprove that sanguine and buoyant temper of mind which, after all she has seen and suffered, still leads her to overrate, in our apprehension, both the merit of past attempts at political amelioration, and the chances of their success hereafter. It is in that futurity, we fear, and in the hopes that make it present, that the lovers of mankind must yet, for a while, console themselves for the disappointments which still seem to beset them. If Madame de Staël, however, predicts with too much confidence, it must be admitted that her labours have a powerful tendency to realize her predictions. Her writings are all full of the most

animating views of the improvement of our social condition, and the means by which it may be effected — the most striking refutations of prevailing errors on these great subjects — and the most persuasive expostulations with those who may think their interest or their honour concerned in maintaining them. Even they who are the least inclined to agree with her, must admit, that there is much to be learned from her writings; and we can give them no higher praise than to say, that their tendency is not only to promote the interests of philanthropy and independence, but to soften, rather than exasperate, the prejudices to which they are opposed.*

WASHINGTON IRVING.†

THE great charm and peculiarity of this work consists now, as on former occasions, in the singular sweetness of the composition, and the mildness of the sentiments, — sicklied over perhaps a little, now and then, with that cloying heaviness into which unvaried sweetness is so apt to subside. The rhythm and melody of the sentences is certainly excessive: as it not only gives an air of mannerism from its uniformity, but raises too strong an impression of the labour that must have been bestowed, and the importance which must have been attached to that which is, after all, but a secondary attribute to good writing. It is very ill-natured in us, however, to object to what has given us so much pleasure; for we happen to be very intense and sensitive admirers of those soft harmonies of studied speech in which this author is so apt to indulge himself; and have caught ourselves, oftener than we shall confess, neglecting his excellent matter, to lap ourselves in the liquid music of his periods — and letting ourselves float passively down the mellow falls and windings of his soft-flowing sentences, with a delight not inferior to that which we derive from fine versification.

We should reproach ourselves still more, however, and with better reason, if we were to persist in the objection which we were at first inclined to make to the extraordinary kindness and disarming gentleness of all this author's views and suggestions; and we only refer to it now, for the purpose of answering and discrediting it, with any of our readers to whom also it may happen to have occurred.

It first struck us as an objection to the author's courage and sincerity. It was quite unnatural, we said to ourselves, for any body to be always on such very amiable terms with his fellow-creatures; and this air of eternal philanthropy was nothing but a pretence, put on to bring himself into favour; and then we proceeded to assimilate him to those silken parasites who are in raptures with every body they meet, and ingratiate themselves in general society by an unmanly suppression of all honest indignation, and a timid avoidance of all subjects of disagreement. Upon due consideration, however, we are now satisfied that this was an unjust and unworthy interpretation. An author who

* Madame de Staël's other Works are reviewed in Vol. ii. page 172. Vol. xi. page 183. Vol. xxi. page 424. Vol. xxii. page 198.

† Bracebridge Hall, or the Humorists; by Geoffrey Crayon. — Vol. xxxvii. page 337. November, 1822.

comes deliberately before the public with certain select monologues of doctrine and discussion, is not at all in the condition of a man in common society, on whom various overtures of baseness and folly are daily obtruded, and to whose sense and honour appeals are perpetually made, which must be manfully answered, as honour and conscience suggest. The author on the other hand, has no questions to answer, and no society to select: his professed object is to instruct and improve the world — and his real one, if he is tolerably honest, is nothing worse than to promote his own fame and fortune by succeeding in what he professes. Now, there are but two ways that we have ever heard of by which men may be improved — either by cultivating and encouraging their amiable propensities, or by shaming and frightening them out of those that are vicious; and there can be but little doubt, we should imagine, which of the two offices is the highest and most eligible — since the one is left in a great measure to Hell and the hangman, — and for the other, we are taught chiefly to look to Heaven, and all that is angelic upon earth. The most perfect moral discipline would be that, no doubt, in which both were combined; but one is generally as much as human energy is equal to; and in fact, they have commonly been divided in practice, without surmise of blame. And truly, if men have been hailed as public benefactors, merely for having beat tyrants into moderation, or coxcombs into good manners, we must be permitted to think, that one whose vocation is different may be allowed to have deserved well of his kind, although he should have confined his efforts to teaching them mutual charity and forbearance, and only sought to repress their evil passions, by strengthening the springs and enlarging the sphere of those that are generous and kindly.

The objection in this general form, therefore, we soon found could not be maintained: — but, as we still felt a little secret spite lingering within us, at our author's universal affability, we set about questioning ourselves more strictly as to its true nature and tendency; and think we at last succeeded in tracing it to an eager desire to see so powerful a pen and such great popularity employed in demolishing those errors and abuses to which we had been accustomed to refer most of the unhappiness of our country. Though we love his gentleness and urbanity, on the whole, we should have been very well pleased to see him rude and surly to our particular opponents; and could not but think it showed a want of spirit and discrimination that he did not mark his sense of their demerits, by making them an exception to his general system of toleration and indulgence. Being Whigs ourselves, for example, we could not but take it a little amiss, that one born and bred a republican, and writing largely on the present condition of England, should make so little distinction between that party and its opponents — and should even choose to attach himself to a Tory family, as the proper type and emblem of the old English character. Nor could we well acquit him of being 'pigeon-livered — and lacking gall,' when we found that nothing could provoke him to give a palpable hit to the Ministry, or even to employ his pure and powerful eloquence in reproving the shameful scurrilities of the ministerial press. We were also a little sore, we believe, on discovering that he took no notice of Scotland, and said absolutely nothing about our Highlanders, our schools, and our poetry.

Now, though we have magnanimously chosen to illustrate this grudge at his neutrality in our own persons, it is obvious that a dissatisfaction

of the same kind must have been felt by all the other great and contending parties into which this and all free countries are necessarily divided. Mr. Crayon has rejected the alliance of any one of these, and resolutely refused to take part with them in the struggles to which they attach so much importance; and consequently has, to a certain extent, offended and disappointed them all. But we must carry our magnanimity a step farther, and confess, for ourselves, and for others, that, upon reflection, the offence and disappointment seem to us altogether unreasonable and unjust. The ground of complaint is, that we see talents and influence — innocently, we must admit, and even beneficially employed — but not engaged on our side, or in the particular contest which we may feel it our duty to wage against the errors or delusions of our contemporaries. Now, in the first place, is not this something like the noble indignation of a recruiting serjeant, who thinks it a scandal that any stout fellow should degrade himself by a pacific employment, and takes offence accordingly at every pair of broad shoulders and good legs which he finds in the possession of a priest or a tradesman? But the manifest absurdity of the grudge consists in this. *1st*, That it is equally reasonable in all the different parties who sincerely believe their own cause to be that which ought to prevail; while it is manifest, that, as the desired champion could only side with one, all the rest could be only worse off by the termination of his neutrality; and *2dly*, That the weight and authority, for the sake of which his assistance is so coveted, and which each party is so anxious to have thrown into its scale, having been entirely created by virtues and qualities which belong only to a state of neutrality, are, in reality, incapable of being transferred to contending parties, and must utterly perish and be annihilated in the attempt. A good part of Mr. C.'s reputation, and certainly a very large share of his influence and popularity with all parties, has been acquired by the indulgence with which he has treated all, and his abstinence from all sorts of virulence and hostility; and it is no doubt chiefly on account of this influence and favour that we and others are rashly desirous to see him take part against our adversaries — forgetting that those very qualities which render his assistance valuable, would infallibly desert him the moment that he complied with our desire, and vanish in the very act of his compliance.

The question then comes to be, not merely whether there should be any neutrals in great national contentions — but whether any man should be allowed to aspire to distinction by acts not subservient to party purposes? — a question which, even in this age of party and polemics, we suppose there are not many who would have the hardihood seriously to propound. Yet *this*, we must be permitted to repeat, *is* truly the question; — for if a man may lawfully devote his talents to music, or architecture, or drawing, or metaphysics, or poetry, and lawfully challenge the *general* admiration of his age for his proficiency in these pursuits, though totally disjoined from all political application, we really do not see why he may not write prose essays on national character and the ingredients of private happiness, with the same large and pacific purposes of pleasure and improvement. To Mr. C. especially, who is not a citizen of this country, it can scarcely be proposed as a duty to take a share in our internal contentions; and though the picture which he professes to give of our country may be more imperfect, and the estimate he makes of our character less complete, from the omission of this less tractable element, the value of the parts

that he has executed will not be lessened, and the beneficial effect of the representation will in all probability be increased. For our own parts, we have ventured, on former occasions, to express our doubts whether the polemical parts, even of a statesman's duty, do not hold too high a place in public esteem—and are sure, at all events, that they ought not to engross the attention of those to whom that duty has not been entrusted. It should never be forgotten, that good political institutions, the sole end and object of all our party contentions, are only valuable as means of promoting the general happiness and virtue of individuals;—and that, important as they are, there are other means, still more direct and indispensable for the attainment of that great end. The cultivation of the kind affections, we humbly conceive, is of still more importance to private happiness than the good balance of the constitution under which we live; and, if it be true, as we most firmly believe, that it is the natural effect of political freedom to fit and dispose the mind for all gentle as well as generous emotions, we hold it to be equally true, that habits of benevolence, and sentiments of philanthropy, are the surest foundations on which a love of liberty can rest. A man must love his fellows before he loves their liberty; and if he has not learned to interest himself in their enjoyments, it is impossible that he can have any genuine concern for that liberty, which, after all, is only a means of enjoyment. We consider, therefore, the writers who seek to soften and improve our social affections, not only as aiming *directly* at the same great end which politicians more circuitously pursue, but as preparing those elements out of which alone a generous and enlightened love of political freedom can ever be formed—and without which it could neither be safely trusted in the hands of individuals, nor prove fruitful of individual enjoyment. We conclude, therefore, that Mr. Crayon is in reality a better friend to Whig principles than if he had openly attacked the Tories—and end this long, and perhaps needless apology for his neutrality, by discovering, that such neutrality is in effect the best nursery for partizans of all that can be shown to be clearly and unquestionably right.

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On the whole, we are very sorry to receive Mr. Crayon's farewell—and we return it with the utmost cordiality. We thank him most sincerely, for the pleasure he has given us—for the kindness he has shown to our country—and for the lessons he has taught, both here and in his native land, of good taste, good nature, and national liberality. We hope he will come back among us soon—and remember us while he is away; and can assure him, that he is in no danger of being speedily forgotten.*

HAZLITT.†

IF Mr. Hazlitt has not generally met with impartial justice from his contemporaries, we must say that he has himself partly to blame. Some of the attacks of which he has been the object, have no doubt been purely brutal and malignant; but others have, in a great measure,

* See a Review of Washington Irving's Sketch Book, Vol. xxxiv. page 160; and of his Life of Columbus, Vol. xlviii. page 1.

† Hazlitt's Lectures on the Drama.—Vol. xxxiv. page 438. November, 1820.

arisen from feelings of which he has himself set the example. His seeming carelessness of that public opinion which he would influence — his love of startling paradoxes — and his intrusion of political virulence, at seasons when the mind is prepared only for the delicate investigations of taste, have naturally provoked a good deal of asperity, and prevented the due appreciation of his powers. We shall strive, however, to divest ourselves of all prepossessions, and calmly to estimate those talents and feelings which he has here brought to the contemplation of such beauty and grandeur, as none of the low passions of this 'ignorant present time' should ever be permitted to overcloud.

Those who regard Mr. Hazlitt as an ordinary writer, have little right to accuse him of suffering antipathies in philosophy or politics to influence his critical decisions. He possesses one noble quality at least for the office which he has chosen, in the intense admiration and love which he feels for the great authors on whose excellences he chiefly dwells. His relish for their beauties is so keen, that while he describes them, the pleasures which they impart become almost palpable to the sense; and we seem, scarcely in a figure, to feast and banquet on their 'nectar'd sweets.' He introduces us almost corporally into the divine presence of the Great of old time — enables us to hear the living oracles of wisdom drop from their lips — and makes us partakers, not only of those joys which they diffused, but of those which they felt in the inmost recesses of their souls. He draws aside the veil of Time with a hand tremulous with mingled delight and reverence; and descants, with kindling enthusiasm, on all the delicacies of that picture of genius which he discloses. His intense admiration of intellectual beauty seems always to sharpen his critical faculties. He perceives it, by a kind of intuitive power, how deeply soever it may be buried in rubbish; and separates it, in a moment, from all that would encumber or deface it. At the same time, he exhibits to us those hidden sources of beauty, not like an anatomist, but like a lover: He does not coolly dissect the form to show the springs whence the blood flows all eloquent, and the divine expression is kindled; but makes us feel it in the sparkling or softened eye, the wreathed smile, and the tender bloom. In a word, he at once analyzes and describes, — so that our enjoyments of loveliness are not chilled, but brightened, by our acquaintance with their inward sources. The knowledge communicated in his Lectures, breaks no sweet enchantment, nor chills one feeling of youthful joy. His Criticisms, while they extend our insight into the causes of poetical excellence, teach us, at the same time, more keenly to enjoy, and more fondly to revere it.

It must seem, at first sight, strange, that powers like these should have failed to excite universal sympathy. Much, doubtless, of the coldness and misrepresentation cast on them has arisen from causes at which we have already hinted — from the apparent readiness of the author to 'give up to party what was meant for mankind' — and from the occasional breaking in of personal animosities on that deep harmony which should attend the reverent contemplation of genius. But we apprehend that there are other causes which have diminished the influence of Mr. Hazlitt's faculties, originating in his mind itself; — and these we shall endeavour briefly to specify.

The chief of these may, we think, be ascribed primarily to the want of proportion, of arrangement, and of harmony in his powers. His mind resembles the 'rich stronde' which Spencer has so nobly described,

and to which he has himself likened the age of Elizabeth, where treasures of every description lie, without order, in inexhaustible profusion. Noble masses of exquisite marble are there, which might be fashioned to support a glorious temple; and gems of peerless lustre, which would adorn the holiest shrine. He has no lack of the deepest feelings, the profoundest sentiments of humanity, or the loftiest aspirations after ideal good. But there are no great leading principles of taste to give singleness to his aims, nor any central points in his mind, around which his feelings may revolve, and his imaginations cluster. There is no sufficient distinction between his intellectual and his imaginative faculties. He confounds the truths of imagination with those of fact—the processes of argument with those of feeling—the immunities of intellect with those of virtue. Hence the seeming inconsistency of many of his doctrines. Hence the want of all continuity in his style. Hence his failure in producing one single, harmonious, and lasting impression on the hearts of his hearers. He never waits to consider whether a sentiment or an image is in place—so it be in itself striking. That keen sense of pleasure in intellectual beauty which is the best charm of his writings, is also his chief deluder. He cannot resist a powerful image, an exquisite quotation, or a pregnant remark, however it may dissipate or even subvert the general feeling which his theme should inspire. Thus, on one occasion, in the midst of a violent political invective, he represents the objects of his scorn as ‘having been beguiled, like Miss Clarissa Harlowe, into a house of ill-fame, and, like her, defending themselves to the last;’—as if the reader’s whole current of feeling would not be diverted from all political disputes, by the remembrance thus awakened of one of the sublimest scenes of romance ever embodied by human power. He will never be contented to touch that most strange and curious instrument, the human heart, with a steady aim, but throws his hand rapidly over the chords, mingling strange discord with ‘most eloquent music.’ Instead of conducting us onward to a given object, he opens so many delicious prospects by the way-side, and suffers us to gaze at them so long, that we forget the end of our journey. He is perpetually dazzled among the sunbeams of his fancy, and plays with them in elegant fantasy, when he should point them to the spots where they might fall on truth and beauty, and render them visible by a clearer and lovelier radiance than had yet revealed them.

The work before us is not the best verification of these remarks; for it has more of continuity and less of paradox than any of his previous writings. With the exception of some strong political allusions in the account of the Sejanus of Ben Jonson, it is entirely free from those expressions of party feeling which respect for an audience, consisting of men of all parties, and men of no party, ought always to restrain. There is also none of that personal bitterness towards Messrs. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, which disfigured his former lectures. His hostility towards these poets, the associates of his early days, has always indeed been mingled with some redeeming feelings which have heightened the regret occasioned by its public disclosure. While he has pursued them with all possible severity of invective, and acuteness of sarcasm, he has protected their intellectual character with a chivalrous zeal. He has spoken as if ‘his only hate had sprung from his only love;’ and his thoughts of its objects, deep rooted in old affection, could not lose all traces of their ‘primal sympathy.’ His bitterest language has had its dash of the early sweets, which no changes

of opinion could entirely destroy. Still his audiences and his readers had ample ground of complaint for the intrusion of personal feelings in inquiries which should be sacred from all discordant emotions. We rejoice to observe, that this blemish is now effaced; and that full and free course is at last given to that deep humanity which has ever held its current in his productions, sometimes in open day, and sometimes beneath the soil which it fertilized, though occasionally dashed and thrown back in its course by the obstacles of prejudice and of passion.

While we sympathize in all Mr. Hazlitt's sentiments of reverence for the mighty works of the olden time, we must guard against that exclusive admiration of antiquity, rendered fashionable by some great critics, which would induce the belief that the age of genius is past, and the world grown too old to be romantic. We can observe in these Lectures, and in other works of their author, a jealousy of the advances of civilization as lessening the dominion of fancy. But this is, we think, a dangerous error; tending to chill the earliest aspirations after excellence, and to roll its rising energies back on the kindling soul. There remains yet abundant space for genius to possess; and science is rather the pioneer than the impeder of its progress. The level roads, indeed, which it cuts through unexplored regions, are, in themselves, less fitted for its wanderings than the tangled ways through which it delights to stray; but they afford it new glimpses into the wild scenes and noble vistas which open near them, and enable it to deviate into fresh scenes of beauty, and hitherto unexplored fastnesses. The face of Nature changes not with the variations of fashion. One state of society may be somewhat more favourable to the development of genius than another; but wherever its divine seed is cast, there will it strike its roots, far beneath the surface of artificial life, and rear its branches into the heavens, far above the busy haunts of common mortals.*

* See Vol. xlii. page 254.

PART SECOND.

POLITICAL HISTORY.

PARGA.*

PARGA, which General Vaudoncourt conjectures, upon slight enough grounds, to be the ancient *Ephyra* — is situated on the coast of Epirus, at the foot of the mountains of Albania, and contained a population of about five thousand souls. No unequivocal remains of Grecian art have been found, we believe, within its narrow district, though a few coins of the lower empire have been picked up; and the traces of antique buildings may be distinguished at the place still popularly known by the name of Ancient Parga (Παλαιὸ Πάργα). In the decline of the Roman power, the new city was built on a rock, washed on three sides by the sea, and backed by a precipitous cliff, on the summit of which is placed its impregnable citadel. It commands, of course, a very magnificent prospect, including on one hand the whole territory of Parga and the mountains of Albania, by which it is bounded from east to west; in a southerly direction, the eye ranges over a part of the Ionian Sea; on the left are seen the Isle of Santa Moro and the famous Sapphic promontory of Leucadia; further on,

*Jam medio apparet fluctu nemorosa Zacynthos
Dulichiumque Sameque et Neritos ardua saxis,*

together with the dark mountains of Cephalonia; on the right, at the distance of twelve miles, are the Islands of Paxo and Antipaxo. The country is extremely fertile and salubrious, abounding with springs and rivulets, and exhibiting, in its slopes and hollows, innumerable groves of oranges, olives, cedars and cypresses. The people were agricultural, and very warlike both by land and water. Without this last quality, indeed, they could not have enjoyed an hour of independence; for they were surrounded on all sides by lawless and ambitious neighbours; and the lofty mountains which divide them from the Albanian clans and the Turkish frontier, were for four hundred years the scene of almost daily contentions.

It would be useless, and not very easy, to inquire into the history of this little settlement, anterior to its connexion with Venice. But, in the year 1401, it was confederated with that proud republic; and continued to enjoy honourable and entire independence in that alliance,

* 1. 'Ιστορία Σουλίου καὶ Παργας, περιέχουσα την χρονολογίαν καὶ τους αὐτῶν πολέμους μετὰ του 'Αλῆ Πασία: viz. The History of Suli and Parga, containing their Chronology as well as their Wars against Ali Pacha. Venice, 1815. 2. A Series of Historical and Political authentic Documents, beginning from the year 1401 and ending with the year 1818, to be presented to the Parliament of Great Britain in behalf of the Citizens of Parga. 3. Proceedings in Parga and the Ionian Islands, with a series of Correspondence and other justificative Documents. By Lieutenant-Colonel C. P. DE BOSSET. London, 1819.— Vol. xxxii. page 263. October, 1819.

till the subversion of the greater state in 1797. It is well known, that from the time of Mahomet II., Venice was not only the great bulwark of Christendom against the growing power of the Turks, but exercised an almost unlimited authority over the eastern shores of the Adriatic, and the maritime and insular cities of Greece. For this dominion they were indebted far more to their policy than their arms: For, taking advantage of the dissensions that always prevail among such small communities, they offered themselves first to one, and then to another, in the imposing character of mediators or allies; and, entering into treaties of perpetual friendship and federation, were gradually converted from generous protectors to absolute masters and tyrannical oppressors.

With Parga, however, they comported themselves differently: and the determined valour of its inhabitants concurring with their own obvious interest to preserve one willing and well-affected ally in that turbulent neighbourhood, insured from them the faithful observance of stipulations which, in other circumstances, they were accustomed to violate with very little scruple. On the 21st day of March 1401, the treaty of federation, thus singularly fulfilled, was first subscribed and sworn to between the two States. For the protection of the weaker power it was agreed, that the Venetians should maintain a body of Italian or Sclavonian troops within the walls of Parga;—but, to prevent the abuse of a power thus dangerously posted, it was solemnly stipulated, that the Pargiots should govern themselves freely and independently, according to the laws and constitutions of their ancestors, and by judges and magistrates of their own election;—that they should not be liable to serve by sea or land, in the militia or galleys of Venice,—nor to engage in any war but in defence of their own territory and the Venetian settlements in Albania;—that they should pay no taxes nor customs on export or import, and be chargeable only with half the ordinary duties when trading to the ports of Venice. This treaty was again confirmed with the same solemnities in August 1447,—and observed, to the mutual satisfaction of both parties, till the end of that century. In 1500, in spite of the Venetian assistance, the city was burned by the Turks—and again in 1560. On this last occasion, the inhabitants were massacred or dispersed, and the whole territory laid waste and desolate. The scattered remnant of its people took shelter among the wandering tribes of the neighbouring mountains, but, by little and little, ventured back to their ancient possessions; and after several years, came at length to rebuild their houses and temples on the spot where their ancestors had fallen. They then sent deputies to Venice to demand their assistance, and the renewal of their ancient alliance; requesting, among other things, that the Senate should assist in fortifying their city, and should also lend them a sum of money to enable the poorer part of the citizens to rebuild their habitations. The Senate was not only just, but generous. It undertook the whole expense of erecting the fortifications; and, instead of a loan from its treasury, it sent, as a free gift, the requisite materials for the construction of their houses. When the particular points of the embassy were adjusted, a new charter, ratifying and confirming all the former treaties, was regularly signed on the 5th of February 1571. It was afterwards repeatedly renewed; and was always religiously fulfilled, not only in its letter, but its spirit, till the final extinction of Venice by the ambition of France and Austria in 1797.

To explain the interest which concurred with the spirit of the people to produce this exemplary and unexampled fidelity to its engagements in a powerful ally, it may be necessary to consider for a moment the nature of the Venetian possessions to the east of the Adriatic, and the condition of the countries in their immediate neighbourhood. This great trading and political republic, it will be recollected, was mistress of the Ionian islands, and of various other islands and continental cities beyond them, — the secure possession of which was not only necessary to her maritime and political greatness, but essential to her commercial prosperity. The Turk had by this time spread himself over Greece, and was pressing heavily upon the Christian frontier both by land and water. To supply her insular settlements with provisions, it was necessary, at all events, that Venice should hold a variety of places on the shore of the Continent; and, by a judicious selection of these, she had also the prospect, from the singular situation of the country, of holding in check, and preventing the further progress of the Ottoman. On the coast of Albania she had therefore established five fortified settlements; — *Bucintro*, antiently *Buthrotum*, the most central and convenient access to the interior of the country; — *Gomenitza*, a large town, and the chief market of the vicinage, from which, up to this day, *Corfu* derives its principal supplies; — *Prevesa*, a very strong place, and commanding the whole channel leading to the gulf of *Arta*; — *Vonitza*, antiently called *Lionnæa*, considered as the key of *Acar-nania*; — and, in the middle of these four, and as it were the keystone of the whole range, *Parga*, such as it has been already described. It was of importance that the attachment of a place so strong, and so situated, should be secured; and it was soon discovered that this could not be done without giving the inhabitants an interest in their fidelity, and making the power and tranquillity of their protectors the basis of their own prosperity and independence. If *Parga* was hostile, the other cities on the coast could not be maintained; and if they were all abandoned, not only would the insular dominion of Venice and her commerce be exposed to the greatest disadvantages, but the most effectual barrier against the Turk would be in a great measure destroyed. To understand this, it will be convenient, and we think not uninteresting, to cast an eye on the condition and extraordinary history of the district now called *Albania*, which has so long served as a frontier against the advance of the Mahometans.

It is very singular, that this mountainous but populous region, placed as it is in a very favourable climate, and surrounded from the earliest times by the most warlike as well as the most civilized nations of the earth, has never to this day been either *conquered* or *civilized*; but continues to the present hour to exhibit the same extraordinary picture of untamed and unpolicied life — the same eternal dissensions of hostile clans — the same scenes of predatory war and piracy, and contempt of art and industry, by which it appears to have been distinguished from the remotest periods of history. Though its natives have taken part in almost all the great revolutions to which human affairs have been subjected in the old world, and have frequently contributed materially to their success, they have never been an united, a polished, or even an agricultural people. From the first to the last, their occupation has been war — individual, predatory, mercenary and vindictive war; and the only habits they have cultivated are those that belong to that vocation. In the most ancient times, they furnished a part of the first

grand piratical expedition of the Argonauts; and fought among the Myrmidons under the walls of Troy. They invaded the territory of infant Rome with Pyrrhus — and that of Greece in her glory with Philip. They formed a considerable part of the armies with which Alexander conquered the world. In later times, under their famous countryman *George Castriotto*, better known by the name of *Scanderbeg*, they checked the proud arms of the Ottoman, and drove him back from the shores of the Adriatic; and in the following age, followed a still more formidable chief of their nation, the warlike *Abraham*, in his rapid career of conquest over Syria, Mesopotamia, and Arabia. In more modern times, they have repeatedly supported the Porte against the most formidable assaults of its rebellious Pachas, and still more frequently enabled these rebels to set at defiance the utmost efforts of their masters. In our days, they contributed mainly to the defeat of our second descent on Egypt, by their sanguinary attack on our forces at Rosetta. It was by their means that Ali extended his conquests over the greater part of Greece; and they are at this moment busy in endeavouring to secure the sovereignty of Egypt for Mahomed Ali. In all these different scenes and periods, the character and habits of the Albanian have been as unvaried as they are remarkable; and the striking picture which Mr. Hobhouse has drawn of them, would have been equally true, we believe, 3,000 years ago, as it is at this day.

‘ They are distinguished, even in a land of barbarians, for the singular cruelty and implacability of their disposition. The men of one mountain watch those of a neighbouring hill, and neither sow nor reap, nor tend their flocks, singly or unarmed. Should one of them wander beyond the precincts of protection, he would be stalked like a deer,—and that without seeing his enemy. In many parts of the country the sowing and reaping of the harvest is delegated to the women, the old and the infirm; and only those labours which require the strength and skill of man, such as the felling of timber, and the cultivation of the vineyard, fall to the lot of the young mountaineer. Averse from every habit of active industry, it is with less unwillingness that they wander on the mountains, or in forests, with their flocks and herds: for the life of the shepherd is a life both of laziness and peril. But the delight of an Albanian, when unoccupied by the wars of his Pacha, or his village, is to bask in the sunshine, to smoke, to doze, or to stroll slowly round the garden of his cottage, tinkling his tuneless lute. Yet though idle, he is still restless and ready to seize his gun, and plunge into the woods at the first summons of his chief. In the pursuit of riches, there is no toil or danger which they will not encounter; but they prefer the life of the soldier to that of the husbandman, and with much greater alacrity support the labours of war than those of agriculture.’

Even the civilizing conquests of Rome passed over them in vain. Flaminius, when he effected his famous settlement of Greece, attempted to give them civil institutions, and to raise them to the rank of allies,—but abandoned the project as impracticable; and he and his successors were satisfied with occupying the passes to their country, and shutting them up in their mountains, to wreak their predatory rage on each other. The issue of the servile war under Spartacus, and the expedition of Pompey against the pirates of the Mediterranean, greatly increased the population of this colony of outlaws, and made it of course still more necessary to watch, and still more hopeless to subdue

them. In later times, the sanguinary conquests of the Turk had a similar effect; and among the Christian fugitives who were swept from Greece by the desolating advance of the Infidel, may be reckoned the first founders of Parga.

At the period of the French Revolution, the country may be said to have belonged partly to the independent clans of the mountains, partly to the Turkish Beys and Pachas really or nominally tributary to the Porte, and partly to the Republic of Venice. The independent clans have always followed, avowedly and almost exclusively, the trade or occupation of robbery; and the name of *Κλεφτης* is given and assumed among them without the idea of reproach. On the borders of Dalmatia they are mostly Christian;—some Catholics; but the greater part of the Greek church. They speak Sclavonian; have no chief or judge but their bishops; and have always adhered to the interests of Russia. In the central parts of the country the independent clans speak the Arnaut, which is unquestionably the oldest, and probably the primitive language of the country; and generally profess Islamism—though without any very rigid observance of its rites or injunctions; and often beat and insult their Dervises as freely as the Papas of their neighbours. On the frontiers of Greece, again, all the independent clans are Christians; and very zealous votaries of the Patriarch of Constantinople. They are more skilful warriors, perhaps, and more determined robbers, than any of the rest; and, until their independence was broken, and their numbers thinned by the sanguinary conquests of Ali Pacha, were the most formidable disturbers of the peace, and the most bloody persecutors of the unbelievers, that ever existed even in this turbulent region. The part of Albania which is claimed by the Porte is ruled, like the greater part of its outlying provinces, by Pachas and Beys, who, while they profess a nominal subjection to its authority, actually govern as absolute princes, and are engaged in perpetual wars with each other, for the extension or defence of their territories. The victors are generally native chiefs, who employ their hereditary influence against those who are sent from Constantinople, and then bribe the Divan to wink at their usurpations, with a part of the booty of the vanquished;—a policy which seldom fails with that venerable cabinet, especially when backed by the consideration, that it might not be quite safe or easy to chastise their rebellion, and that those eternal wars among the Pachas probably prevent any one from obtaining such an ascendancy as might encourage him openly and entirely to throw off the pretence of subjection—and thus put an end to the chance either of tribute or of bribes. The portion of the country under the dominion of Venice has been already sufficiently described.

The ultimate fate of this singular region, and especially of the little State whose extinction we mean to record, forms a part of the history of Ali Pacha, and of his relations with the French Revolution. That celebrated chief, indisputably the greatest of the Turkish viceroys, and the most brutal barbarian of his age, has been rendered interesting, and in some measure familiar to English readers, by the lively and detailed accounts of him that have lately been given to the public, both by Mr. Hobhouse and Dr. Holland. Yet his early history, and the unprincipled ferocity of his character, have neither of them been well understood: and our readers, we believe, will easily excuse us for presenting them with the following brief sketch of them, which we have had the means of obtaining from persons of the best information.

His ancestors were chiefs of the independent clan of the Toczides — Mahometans settled in Tepeleni. His grandfather, in the capacity of a Bey appointed by the Porte, ruled over a pretty extensive district, adjoining to his hereditary domain, and fell at the siege of Corfu. His son, however, was not allowed to succeed to his command, and was plundered by the neighbouring Pachas of almost all his possessions. On his death, the young Ali, who was born about 1750, found himself under the guardianship of a mother, fierce, proud and warlike as any of her tribe, — and easily prevailed on her, when only in his sixteenth year, to commit to him the command of that faithful domestic band, by the help of which the Albanian widow had imperfectly preserved her independence. With those household troops, the youth repeatedly attempted to make reprisals on some of his oppressors, but was singularly unfortunate in all his early enterprises. In his very first campaign, he was completely routed, and taken prisoner by the Vizir Kourid Pacha, who was so much struck with his beauty, vivacity and apparent gentleness, that he was induced to look on the whole affair as a piece of youthful folly, and to send him away with a paternal rebuke. In less than a year, however, he was again in arms, and again defeated; and his mother's hoards being by this time exhausted, he betook himself to the vocation of a robber, to collect funds for a larger army. Even in this laudable pursuit, however, he had neither luck nor conduct, — but was speedily discomfited and made prisoner by the Vizir of Joannina, who was urged by all the neighbouring chieftains to leave the young bandit to the last sentence of the law. But the Vizir was desirous of finding occupation for those turbulent chiefs, of whom he was very reasonably jealous; and therefore thought fit not only to dismiss his prisoner, but secretly to supply him with the means of carrying on his depredations. He was destined, however, to acquire his military skill in the school of adversity. He was again attacked, and so totally routed, that he was obliged to seek refuge alone among the rocks of the mountains, and actually to pledge his scimitar to buy himself a meal. On his return in this low condition to his mother's house, he was received by the Amazon with a Spartan spirit of disdain, and told that he should put on the habit of a woman, and confine himself to the tasks of the Haram. He found means, however, to appease her fiery temper, and again took the field at the head of 600 men. But his adverse star was still in the ascendent, — and he was again defeated and forced to fly in the night with the broken remnant of his forces. In this disastrous state, he went into a ruinous building to rest himself, and meditate on his cheerless prospects, and remained a long time buried in deep thought, and scoring the ground unconsciously with the stick which he held in his hand; when it was stopped in its motion by something solid just under the surface, — and on stooping to examine the nature of the obstacle, he found a casket containing a large quantity of gold. This anecdote he himself communicated to General Vaudoncourt; and the occurrence was too critical as well as extraordinary, to be readily forgotten. With the money thus strangely obtained, he raised a force of 2000 men, turned suddenly on his pursuers, gained his first victory, and returned in triumph to Tepeleni.

From this period he has been almost uniformly successful, — but has as uniformly stained his successes by the most incredible treachery and cruelty. The very day of his return to his home, he persuaded the chief men of his followers, that his brother had acted perfidiously,

and been in correspondence with their enemies, and immediately went with them to his apartment, and with his own hand stabbed him to the heart before them. Next day, however, he laid the blame of the murder on his mother; who he said had poisoned his unhappy victim, to deliver him from a dangerous rival,—and then rewarded this imputed excess of maternal partiality, by deposing her from the authority she had hitherto exercised, and shutting her up a close prisoner in the haram,—where she speedily died of rage and vexation.

To maintain and employ his troops, he now resumed his occupation of robbery on a more extended scale, and laid under contribution the whole country of Epirus and Macedonia, and blockaded the roads leading from the declivities of Pindus into Thessaly. His ravages at last excited the attention of the Divan; and the Dervendgi Pacha (or Protector-General of the High Roads) was ordered to march out against him. The wily robber, however, contrived first of all to defeat his advanced parties, and then to proffer his assistance against the Vizir of Skutari, at that time in rebellion against the Porte. The offer was accepted; and the rebellious Vizir being brought to submission, the services of Ali were represented in such advantageous colours to the Divan, that he was not only forgiven, but received into especial favour;—under the shadow of which he speedily recovered all that had been wrested from his father, and pillaged and plundered at his pleasure the Beys who had united against him. He was still but twenty years of age, when, after all these exploits, he obtained in marriage the daughter of the Pacha of Argiro Castro. Soon after, a quarrel arose between two of his brothers-in-law, which he thought would be best terminated by instigating the younger to assassinate the elder—which was accordingly done, and gave rise to a civil war; from which, however, the abhorrence of the people prevented him from deriving all the benefits he expected. In consequence, however, of a subsequent feud, he obtained possession of the town of Charmova, where he stabbed the governor, massacred the inhabitants, and sacked and ruined the place. He next attacked the Greek clans of Liebovo, and subdued them after a sanguinary resistance; and by these two conquests made himself master of the whole valley of the Chelydnus.

A little time after, the Porte wished to rid itself of Selim Pacha of Delvino; and Ali took charge of this commission, on condition of being named Pacha in his place. Accordingly, he insinuated himself into his confidence, as well as that of his son Mustapha, and was enabled to surround them with his own satellites. He then caused the father to be beheaded, and the son to be arrested; but, in spite of these vigorous and judicious measures, he was compelled to fly from the indignation and vengeance of their subjects. The merit of his conduct, however, was not overlooked at Constantinople; and the Porte considering him as a skilful and intrepid servant, named him Lieutenant of the Dervendgi Pacha. The principal, a native of Constantinople, being quite ignorant of the country, was dazzled by the hope of dissipating the brigands, by taking for his lieutenant the most celebrated of their number. Ali provided them with diplomas; and the chiefs of the robbers became legitimate conquerors. This traffic and his own exactions brought him in a large sum of money. The Divan, however, finding at last that no road in European Turkey was free, divested the Dervendgi Pacha and his Lieutenant of their office. The first, on his return, was regularly beheaded at Constantinople: but Ali having

prudently sent a good share of his plunder to some of the principal ministers, and followed this up with an offer to join the Grand Vizir in the war broken out at this period (1787) between Austria, Russia and Turkey, was not only pardoned, but praised and promoted. During the war, his military experience, and the valour of his Albanians, obtained for him general esteem, and at the same time tended greatly to enrich him. But in order to secure to himself a retreat in case of disasters, he entered into a secret and treasonable correspondence with Prince Potemkin, under the pretext of negotiating for the release of one of his nephews who had been made prisoner. He has still the imprudent vanity to show a watch set in diamonds presented to him by Potemkin, in testimony 'of esteem for his bravery and talents.'

After the peace, being possessed of considerable riches, he began regularly to entertain agents at Constantinople, in order to watch the rising or declining power of the different ministers, and bribe their patronage. By these means he obtained the title of Pacha of Trikala, a small district in Thessaly. His vicinity terrified the Greek merchants of Joannina, who feared his exactions. A complete anarchy, however, reigned at that time in the town; the government of which was vacant, and the subject of bitter contentions and busy intrigues, both among the inhabitants and the neighbouring Beys. The fear of Ali, however, composed all differences; and the people, and the various competitors for the rule, sent a joint supplication to the Divan, that they might have any Pacha but this dreaded freebooter; and actually obtained a *firman* prohibiting him from entering the city. By means of his agents, Ali was apprised of this order before those who had obtained it; and took his measures with the promptitude and audacity which belonged to his character. He presented himself with his troops at the gates of the city, and exhibited a *firman* from the Grand Signior, appointing him Dervendgi Pacha, and ordering him to enter Joannina without delay. The inhabitants, though stunned with this intelligence, did not dare to refuse obedience; and Ali and his forces were quietly garrisoned in the citadel. His *firman*, the reader will easily understand, was a daring forgery of his own,—and almost immediately detected. But being now in the military occupation of the city, he compelled the inhabitants, under threats of a general massacre, to subscribe an urgent petition for his appointment as their governor; and this petition being forwarded to Constantinople along with a large sum of money extorted by him from the subscribers, produced such an effect, that he was confirmed in the government, and thus became master of the place, which has since been distinguished as his capital. Not being quite sure, however, of the forgiveness of the Porte, when all things should be known, he thought it as well to make himself strong by alliance, and secured the interest of the French resident at Prevesa, through whom he afterwards endeavoured, though without success, to open a correspondence with Louis XVI. in the character of an independent sovereign.

Such was the career of Ali up to the era of the French Revolution. The increase of his power, and the boldness and desperation of his character, had long given the greatest uneasiness to the Venetians, upon whose continental settlements he scarcely disguised his pretensions. All they could do was to find work for him in the interior, and to foment insurrections among the clans and chieftains whom he had subdued, and was oppressing. Though nominally a subject of the

Porte, they knew well that his conduct was looked upon with jealousy by that government, and found little difficulty in stipulating with them, 'that Ali should not be permitted to erect any fort on the continent within a mile from the coast,' — a stipulation so rigorously enforced, that, while Venice had an existence, he was never able even to fortify his custom-house at Salamora, though at the very bottom of the Bay of Arta. It was the possession of Parga that enabled the republic to maintain this control over the most faithless and daring of barbarians. Impregnable from its position and defences, it was closely connected by the ties of religion, and the relations of trade, with all the Christian tribes in the heart of Albania; and naturally became, not only the asylum of all who were driven from their homes by the violence of Ali, but the seat of those plots and cabals by which his government was continually menaced and disturbed. The Venetians winked at all those proceedings, and even encouraged them; but, being at peace with the Turk, they never allowed their garrison to take arms against its pretended subjects; and represented the hostilities in which the Pargiots were perpetually engaged with the forces of Ali, as mere acts of self-defence against the assaults of a banditti, whom no regular government could possibly avow. Ali, in his turn, could not but feel the importance of this little settlement; and openly avowed his animosity to its brave possessors. No stranger went to see him at Joannina, to whom he did not pour out his abuse of the Pargiots. According to him, they were mere robbers and harbourers of outlaws; and no part of maritime Greece could be at peace till they were exterminated. Mr. Hobhouse seems to have been somewhat influenced by those invectives, in the account he has given of this warlike community; but both Col. de Bosset and Mr. Dodwell, who had far better opportunities of observation, vindicate them from those aspersions, and represent them as remarkably industrious, gay, and hospitable — the men handsome and sober, with more than the characteristic bravery of the climate — and the women chaste and unwatched, and cheerfully devoted to their primitive tasks and pastimes. All observers indeed concur in stating, that the smiling aspect of this little territory, and the busy prosperity of its inhabitants, formed but lately a striking contrast to the wastes and ruins with which it was everywhere surrounded. And now it is the very centre and seat of desolation! The voice of gladness has everywhere ceased in its fields; and it is more waste and ruinous than any other spot in this region of havoc and oppression! But we must resume the thread of our narrative.

In 1797, Venice fell before the arms of France — and the Ionian Isles passed of course under their dominion. The ready treachery of Ali had already made overtures to Bonaparte, and offered to join him against the Turk, provided he would engage for his ultimate protection. The conqueror received these proposals favourably, and allowed him to embark troops, and transport them to different points of the coast; and, at the same time, furnished him with engineers to conduct his sieges, and repair his fortification. In 1798, the Porte having declared war on France on account of the invasion of Egypt, the sincerity of Ali was brought to the test. He accordingly recruited his forces, and drew out all his powers; and, assuring the agents of Bonaparte that he was waiting for a favourable moment to strike a fatal blow at the common foe, he demanded instant payment of 80,000 livres as the value of provisions which he said had been furnished by him to Admiral

Bruix. The Governor of Corfu having no money to make payment, presented him with battering cannon in exchange; and the double traitor having made all he could of his dissimulation, wrote to the French Adjutant-General Roze to come over to him without delay, that they might confer upon the best means of opposing the Russian and Turkish fleet that was advancing against them. Roze, who was the intimate friend and frequent guest of Ali, went without suspicion or attendants; when he was instantly seized, thrust into a dungeon, tortured to extort information, and then sent mangled to Constantinople, where he speedily died.

Having thus taken his part in the quarrel, he proceeded instantly to besiege all the French (formerly Venetian) settlements on the mainland; and, by prodigious superiority of numbers, and the arms which he had thus treacherously obtained, he speedily succeeded with the most of them. Bucintro fell the first — and he proceeded with near ten thousand men to Prevesa. This position was more defensible — and the French engineers were busy erecting batteries to protect its approaches, when the natives insisted that it would be much better to dig through a narrow isthmus by which the enemy must advance — and, although it was explained to them that this operation could not possibly be accomplished in time to be of service, they all deserted the batteries, and rushed out to work at the excavation. Ali was upon them before any thing effectual was done — and, although the defence was obstinate, and the victory most sanguinary, he forced his way at last over the dead bodies of his opponents. He took brutal and bloody vengeance for their resistance. On the day of the assault, men, women, and children were butchered 'till night-fall — and the next morning all the inhabitants fit to bear arms, were marched out to the edge of the great ditch they had begun to dig on the isthmus, and there barbarously slaughtered. The city itself was set on fire. The very day of this exploit, the conqueror addressed the following letter, the original of which, written in Romaic, with a mixture of Albanian, now lies before us, to the inhabitants of Parga. ‘Learn, men of Parga, the victory of this day, and the fate of Prevesa. In now writing to you, I would have you to understand, that being my neighbours, I do not desire war with you — but only that two or three of you should come to me, that we may confer about making you fellow-subjects of my sovereign. Whatever form of government you wish, I will grant to you. But if you refuse, I will deal with you as enemies — and the blame be on your own heads.’ The Pargiots made no answer; — and another letter was sent the day following — omitting the proposal of subjection to the Turk, but requiring them to massacre or drive out the French garrison among them. The following answer, which we think was read to the House of Commons by Sir Charles Monck, was instantly returned.

‘To ALI PACHA. We have received your two letters, and we rejoice that you are well. The compliance which you require of us, you will not easily obtain; because your conduct, exhibited to us in the fate of our neighbours, determines us all to a glorious and free death, rather than to a base and tyrannical subjugation. You write to us to fall upon and slay the French. This is not in our power; but if it were, we would decline to do it; for our country has boasted her good faith for four centuries past, and in that time often vindicated it with her blood. How then, shall we now sully that glory?

‘ Never. To threaten us unjustly is in your power ; but threats are
 ‘ no characteristic of great men ; and, besides, we have never known
 ‘ what it was to fear, having accustomed ourselves to glorious battles
 ‘ for the right of our country. God is just ; we are ready ; the moment
 ‘ comes when he who conquers shall be glorified So fare you well.
 ‘ Parga, Oct. 16, 1798.’

Ali stormed at this reply ; but the place was too strong to be attempted by force, and he set himself to assail it by art and intrigue. The united arms of the Turks and the Russians had now effected the conquest of the Seven Islands ; and it became necessary for them to settle their future government. By the treaty of 1800, they were erected into an independent republic, under the special protection of the two allies ;—but unluckily for Parga, and the other continental towns which had hitherto formed a part of them, Ali found means to have it settled that these should all be given up to the Porte. That all these places, with the single exception of Parga, had already been won by the arms of Ali, was, no doubt, an apology for this arrangement — and the jealousy which existed between the two allied powers of Russia and Turkey, made it difficult to come to any very satisfactory arrangement. But there is no doubt that, in consenting to this cession, the Russian negociators trusted too much to the chapter of accidents, and reckoned too securely on the opportunities which the perfidy and oppression of Ali would afford for resuming possession of those continental settlements — by the assistance especially of the Suliotes, whose territory lay immediately behind that part of the coast, who had always been faithful to the interests of Russia, and upon whose mountain retreats Ali had never been able to make any serious impression.

The result showed but too fatally the errors of this sanguine calculation,—the occupation of the coast having enabled the ferocious Ali in a very few years utterly to exterminate the heroic warriors of Suli, over whom, till he obtained that commanding position, he had never gained any decided advantage. There never was a more bloody or brutal course of warfare than that which is detailed by a native of Parga, in one of the works before us, as terminating in the extirpation of his brave brethren of Suli ;—we can only afford to give the closing scene as a specimen. The scanty remnant of the Suliote warriors occupied a strong position on a mountain, where for six days they maintained themselves against the desperate attacks of the Mussulmans, under the command of an heroic ecclesiastic of the name of Samuel, who had acted as their leader for nearly three years. Their provisions and water being cut off, they were at last obliged to capitulate, and obtained leave to retire to Parga ; and Samuel with four of his officers remained to deliver up their stores and ammunition to the commissioners of Ali. They had no sooner entered the place, however, than he set fire with his own hand to the magazine, and blew himself and the whole party to atoms. The greater part of those who were retreating to Parga, were massacred, without distinction of sex or age — a group of women who were pursued to the brink of a precipice, dashed their children over the cliffs, that they might not live in servitude to the infidels. One family of eight women and three infants — for all the men had fallen in battle — had obtained from one of the sons of Ali a promise to be allowed to remain unmolested in the dwelling they then occupied ; but, a few days after, a party of his soldiers came and insisted on carrying off the younger women, and threatened

the older ones with death. The desperate inmates having obtained a short time for preparation, brought out three barrels of gunpowder which had been secreted in the house, and drew in a circle round them. The younger women calmly recited their prayers; and the mother, after blessing her unpolluted daughters, and the infant orphans of her sons, set fire to the train, and blew the whole in the air! The Pargiots collected their bones, and interred them honourably, with an inscription commemorating the manner of their death; and thus was the tribe of the Suliotes exterminated in 1803! But we must return to the treaty of 1800.

The Pargiots, after many vain entreaties to be incorporated with the new republic, succeeded at last in having certain conditions inserted into the treaty, by which the sovereignty, or patronage rather, of their State was to be ceded to the Ottoman. The chiefs of the Seven Islands, who knew that their subsistence depended chiefly on that community, and the Russians, who were far from wishing to put them thus at the mercy of the Porte, exerted themselves in support of their just pretensions. And it was at last solemnly stipulated in the definitive treaty, ‘ That they should retain all the privileges they had enjoyed of old under the Venetians — *that no mosque should be built within their territory, nor any Mussulman be allowed to settle or hold land within it* — that they should pay no taxes but those which had been antiently paid to Venice, and should enjoy their laws both civil and criminal exactly as before — and, finally, that to secure the political rights of the new sovereign, a bey or officer of rank should be sent from Constantinople, whose functions, and the place of his residence, should be determined with the advice, and *to the entire satisfaction of the republic of the Seven Islands.*’

This treaty, and the course of succeeding events, were found sufficient to control the violence and perfidy of Ali, and to exclude the Turks from the territory of Parga, till the possession of it was ceded to the English, and its fate referred to the Congress of Vienna. An Aga, but without any troops, occasionally resided in the place; and a Bey on the neighbouring coast rather helped to keep Ali faithful to his engagements, than assisted him to infringe them. There can indeed be no better or more practical proof of their independence, than that they were allowed, three years after, to give refuge to the remnant of the Suliotes when driven finally from their territories by the arms of Ali.

The power of this ferocious chief, however, was now greatly augmented. The Divan, in its dread of the establishments of Russia in the islands, lost for a time its jealousy and distrust of the most powerful and faithless of its subjects, and appointed him Governor General of the whole of Romelia, with supreme authority over all the Pachas of the Grecian provinces. This great power he rendered immediately subservient to his ruling passions of avarice and revenge. He kept two-fifths of the contributions he levied for government, for his own use — and punished the least delay of payment by brutal and bloody plunder. On one occasion he is said to have extorted in this way upwards of ten millions of piastres — and added 20,000 sheep to his numerous flocks. In the midst of this wealth and grandeur, however, he found time to avenge on the unfortunate inhabitants of Gardiki, an affront which some of them had put upon his mother and sister about forty years before. He surrounded their city with his forces, and

starved them into a capitulation, promising solemnly that they should not be reduced into slavery. When he entered the place, he ordered all those who had been concerned in this antiquated offence, and their descendants, to be brought before him. Most of the actual delinquents, of course, were dead — but their progeny appears to have been numerous; for when their numbers were counted, it appeared that there were no fewer than 739 males, and nearly as many of the other sex. The males were bound and fastened in regular ranks, in an enclosed area; and the women round the outside of the walls. Ali then entered the enclosure, and immediately blew out the brains of the first man he came up to. His attendants followed his example; and the whole were butchered on the spot, in the hearing of their wives and daughters. They were allowed to rot where they fell — and their bones are there yet; — the monster merely shutting up the enclosure, and putting an inscription over the door, signifying that it was not to be opened again till his agents, who had been despatched all over Greece for that purpose, had collected more of the offenders, to share the fate of their associates.

He looked, however, with unfeigned terror, on the growing strength of the Russians; and, after the battle of Austerlitz, and the peace of Presburg, had restored the ascendancy of France, he had the audacity to renew his overtures to Bonaparte — who sent to him, in the capacity of consul-general, a certain M. Pouqueville, who, in a gasconading book of travels, had enlarged very freely on the vices and infirmities of the Pacha. The English consul, in hopes of producing a quarrel, contrived that Ali should hear of this book; but a Mussulman laughs at printed abuse, and Ali did not chuse at that moment to hazard a rupture with France for the pleasure of decapitating M. Pouqueville. From this time his dependence on the Porte may be said to have been merely nominal; for though, in his intercourse with the Divan, he still assumes the style of a delegate, he has not only acted in all things at his own discretion, but has quietly retained all his dignities, without seeking any confirmation of them from the successive Sultans he has outlasted: — and though he finds it convenient to send large sums of money every now and then to Constantinople, it is rather in the capacity of the munificent ally of every new vizier, than of a tributary of the Empire. Nothing, indeed, could be more wretched than the anarchy, or more despicable than the feebleness, that had now overtaken this great State, and paralyzed even its most meritorious exertions; — insomuch, that, when a great force was levied, with the popular approbation, to repress the insults of the Russians, the forces, upon reaching the Danube, actually found themselves without a leader or instructions — and so thought the best thing they could do was to enlist, in pretty equal moieties, in the ranks of the Ayan of Schecunla and the Pehlavian Aga, who were very eagerly desolating their country with civil war, in the very face of the common enemy. Ali, in this stirring scene, endeavoured to take advantage of all parties; and, in order to come at their secrets, made it a practice to open the despatches of all the diplomatic agents in his neighbourhood. In 1807 alone, he assassinated three couriers; and then, to clear himself of blame, hanged the wretches by whose agency the crime had been committed. He was especially anxious, however, to stand well with Napoleon — and not quite liking the tone of M. Pouqueville, despatched Mahomet Effendi to him in the capacity of his ambassador. This worthy Mussulman

had been formerly a Dominican friar, and head of the Inquisition at Malta. When he took that island in his way to Egypt, Bonaparte had carried the good father along with him as an interpreter. On his return home, his reverence was unluckily captured by a Corsair, who gave him in a present to Ali : and he, finding in him a decided vocation to Islamism, placed him at the head of his Divan. He danced attendance on Bonaparte through the campaign which terminated at Tilsit — and struggled hard to get the Ionian islands for his master at the peace. But it pleased the high contracting parties, at this time, to spare the young republic ; and the eloquence of Mahomet was in vain. Baffled in this great object, Ali insisted that Parga at least should be delivered up to him, in terms of the treaty of 1800, as the only representative of the Ottoman Porte on the spot :—for the Bey, who had faithfully fulfilled that treaty, had been obliged to remove before the advance of the Russians ; and at one time an order was issued to comply with this request. But, on further consideration of the matter, Bonaparte instructed his ambassador to reply, with more regard both to truth and justice than was afterwards shown by the Congress, ‘ that Ali ‘ having violated all the clauses of the treaty of 1800 in favour of the ‘ ex-Venetian towns, the whole stipulations of that treaty, as to those ‘ towns, must be held as annulled ; and that neither he nor the Porte ‘ had now any claim to the military occupation of Parga.’ In reality, every one of those stipulations had been disregarded as to all the towns of which Ali had got possession ; and it was merely because he had not been allowed to enter Parga, that its rights had been respected.

Disappointed in his hopes from France, he now paid his court to the English ; and certainly did receive from us more countenance than either his character or services deserved. Lord Collingwood at one time relied on his co operation in our expedition against the French forces in the Seven Islands ; but it was soon found that he was not to be depended on ; and in fact he never did any thing for us whatever, except supplying us with provisions at a dear rate — a favour which he extended at the same time to our enemies, even in violation of our blockade. The notice we took of him, however, induced Bonaparte to show him a little more attention — after his fashion ; and accordingly, he sent him several engineers to fortify his seaports, who took the opportunity to make a survey of his strengths, and to spy out all the vulnerable points in his positions.

At last Bonaparte was overthrown ; and the French power no sooner ceased to be formidable, than Ali darted at once like a raven on his prey, and so early as March 1814 surprised the little town of Agia, which is in the territory of Parga ; massacred all the inhabitants ; sent the women and children to the slave market ; raised a fort to maintain his conquest, and marched in open hostility against Parga itself. The French, as successors to the Venetians, had a garrison of 200 men in the citadel, to whom the inhabitants instantly applied for assistance against this assault. But the commander, an Arab who had entered the French service in Egypt, pretended that France, being at peace with the Porte, could not fight against a Turkish commander, and declared that he could take no part in the business. The inhabitants, thus left to themselves, went out, men and women, to meet the invaders ; and kept up so hot a fire on their ranks—the women charging and handing their muskets to the men—that after a sanguinary struggle, in which one of his nephews was slain, Ali was forced to retire, and betake

himself to negociation with the French, who being at that time blockaded by us at Corfu, he thought could easily give up this more insignificant position to purchase his assistance against us. It rather appears, however, that his propositions were rejected. But the most material fact to be noticed is, that the Pargiots now made an application to our commanders to be taken under British protection, and, after some hesitation, General Campbell sent an aid-de-camp to hold a conference with their deputies at Paxo, where, being joined by Captain Hoste of the *Bacchante*, and Captain Black of the *Havannah*, it was agreed, that they *should be taken under the protection of Great Britain, and share the fate of the Seven Islands*; provided they would, in the first place, send a written declaration, signed by the principal inhabitants, that this was their own wish; and, secondly, they should themselves displace the French flag, and mount that of England on their citadel, as soon as the two frigates appeared before the town. The deputies agreed to these terms, and got a flag, with which they succeeded in getting back to their city in the night; and immediately assembled a meeting of the principal inhabitants, to deliberate on the propositions which had been made to them. Among these was an aged citizen, regarded among them with great veneration, on account of his steady patriotism and extensive knowledge,—though his great age and austere disposition had for many years withheld him from taking any very active part in their affairs. After listening to the statements of the deputies and other citizens, he is said to have delivered the following very remarkable speech, of which we shall endeavour to present our readers with a literal translation from the vulgar Greek, in which it is printed in the volume of documents before us. In point of political wisdom and manly vigour, as well as in its general tone and manner, it seems to us to bear a very striking resemblance to the business speeches we meet with in Thucydides; while in some points, on which it would be painful to dwell, the speaker seems to be inspired with something of a prophetic spirit.

‘ Fellow Citizens — The expulsion of the French appears to me to
 ‘ be so necessary, that I will not waste words in recommending it. But
 ‘ I exhort you well to consider, before you yield yourselves up to the
 ‘ English, that the King of England now has in his pay all the Kings of
 ‘ Europe,—obtaining money for this purpose from his merchants; so
 ‘ that in that country the merchants and the King are but as one:
 ‘ whence, should it become advantageous to the merchants to sell you,
 ‘ in order to conciliate Ali, and obtain certain commercial advantages
 ‘ in his harbours, *the English will sell you to Ali*. If, however, you still
 ‘ persist in surrendering yourselves to England, beware how you con-
 ‘ fide in the promises of military men, whose trade, whatever may be
 ‘ their dignity, is but that of a servant; therefore, being taught only
 ‘ to obey, they seldom have wisdom to weigh their promises, and never
 ‘ have power to fulfil them—as you do, because you are all free men.
 ‘ But go and present yourselves before their King: If he mean to be
 ‘ the master of this city, let him swear it upon the Gospel of Christ.
 ‘ Yet I would not entirely trust even him. For within these twenty
 ‘ years, Christian princes have openly turned their subjects and friends
 ‘ into merchandize, and have shown but little regard to the Gospel.
 ‘ But suppose you are once in the hand of England—you may be
 ‘ governed well, or you may be governed ill. But the *well* is un-
 ‘ certain; and if *ill*, you will have bereft yourselves of all remedy.

‘ The King of England has not that sword of justice in his hands, that
‘ he can like Napoleon, Alexander, or the Sultan, decapitate the mis-
‘ governing Pachas of his distant provinces. On the contrary, his
‘ justice is feeble ; because, being surrounded by contending parties,
‘ he is compelled to lean for support upon one party to-day, and to-
‘ morrow upon another, and yet to pay regard to all ; while each
‘ party, in its turn, conceals as much as it can ; defends and often
‘ praises the blunders of its partisans ; so that a governor may treat
‘ you as slaves, and yet be fearless of punishment. Nor would you,
‘ O men of Parga, — I say *you*, because I hope soon to lay me down in
‘ the peace of God, and be buried by your hands in this church, — nor
‘ would you be able to obtain redress. This our city is small and
‘ poor, and simple and ignorant : whence then shall it have power, how
‘ find money ? and where the learned citizens, who, being sent to the
‘ King of England, might show him the truth ? However, this Parga
‘ still possesses those arms which have, for so many generations, pre-
‘ vented a single armed Mussulman from entering her walls. I say not
‘ this that you should be proud of the defeat which that butcher of the
‘ Christians lately sustained at your hands ; for that victory came from
‘ God, — God who will not cease to protect you as heretofore, and who
‘ can do so because he is just, and because he is almighty ; whilst the
‘ Russians and the French, just and unjust, powerful and weak, by
‘ turns, have, as the fruit of their protection, exposed you to incon-
‘ ceivable perils, and kept you for several years in perpetual anxiety.
‘ These English too are but men : and may you not live to see them
‘ expelled from all countries which they have no longer money to pay,
‘ caged up in their island, and preying upon each other from want ?
‘ Why then recur to foreign aid ? Parga is sufficient both to nourish
‘ and to defend you. Ali cannot take her by land : he cannot blockade
‘ her by sea, by which your countrymen in the Islands can always
‘ supply you with food, and which, in case of extremity, will always
‘ afford you an easy escape ; though I, for my part, let the danger be
‘ ever so great, would never exhort you to go forth vagrants and beg-
‘ gars, with your wives and children, into a foreign land. Let us all
‘ die here at home ; and when no way of safety remains for the city,
‘ set it on fire, that these Infidels may only triumph over our ruined
‘ houses and mangled carcasses. However, this danger cannot last
‘ long : for as much as Ali is now old, and his head is always under
‘ the sword of the Sultan, whose wrath, though it has so long slept,
‘ should it at length awake, no Turk will be able to escape. At all
‘ events, as long as you remain masters of your own city, so long will
‘ you be able to follow that line of conduct, which, under the mercy
‘ of God, circumstances may render fit. The Infidels, indeed, may
‘ force you to give them battle, and reduce you to great extremity :
‘ yet you will slay many of them to appease the blessed souls of so
‘ many Christians slain by them. But, once garrisoned by strangers,
‘ you will be subject to the will of another ; you will not be able to use
‘ good fortune, should it ever befall you ; and you will for ever lose
‘ the right of defending your country, and even of burying yourselves
‘ beneath its ruins near your dear forefathers.’

In spite of this remonstrance, the majority of the meeting resolved to accede to the propositions of the English, and to sign the declaration required ; upon which the old man, refusing to set his hand to it, finally reminded them to be careful in enforcing the condition expressed

in the English offer, that they should follow the fate of the Seven Islands. ‘For you may be sure,’ added he, ‘that the English will employ every art of sophistry to subject as much as they can of Greece to the Porte, in hope of strengthening it against the dreaded preponderance of the Russians. Perhaps when they have once acknowledged your natural dependence upon Corfu, they will be unable to betray you, without sacrificing at the same time all the Seven Islands to the Infidels; a sacrifice which would cover them with infamy, — although in proportion as men are powerful, they care less for dishonour.’ He then made his admonition be recorded in the archives of the city; and the assembly, coming out of the church before daylight, drew up and addressed to the English commander the following explicit declaration.

‘We, undersigned Primates of Parga, engage, on behalf of the population, that at the moment when the frigates of his Britannic Majesty shall appear before our fortress, we will subject our country and territories to the protection of the invincible arms of Great Britain, and will plant on the walls of our fortress her glorious flag — it being the determination of our country to follow the fate of the Seven Islands, as we have always been under the same jurisdiction. — 17th March 1814.’

In the course of the day, the *Bacchante* appeared in the road-stead; and the British flag was displayed, not from the ramparts of the citadel, but from a low spot near the shore. Our officers were not satisfied with this; and, after some negotiation, intimated, that unless the inhabitants hoisted the British flag on the proper flagstaff of the citadel, they would make sail the day after, and leave them to their fate. The French commander had threatened to blow up the town by firing the magazine, if any attempt was made to dislodge him; and some speedy and decided measure therefore now became necessary. Next morning very early, a widow, pretending business with the commander, went into the citadel with the flag concealed under her clothes. She was followed by a lad who used to sell fruit and vegetables to the soldiers, and was accordingly admitted without suspicion. After ascertaining that everything was in the situation on which his friends had reckoned, he gave the signal, by pronouncing, as in the course of crying his vegetables, a Greek word on which they had previously agreed; and instantly the sentinels were knocked down, and a crowd of armed citizens sprung at once upon every point of the works, some mounting by escalade, and others by different passages. In a few minutes they were complete masters of the place; and the British flag was triumphantly hoisted on the top of the castle. The *Bacchante* immediately came up to the fort. The French garrison were allowed to capitulate honourably; and, on the 22d of March, Sir Charles Gordon landed with his detachment, sent off the French to Corfu, and with his troops took full and solemn possession of the place. Some time after, Lord Bathurst, by command of the Prince Regent, expressed to the king’s commissioners for the government of the Ionian islands, the royal approbation of what had been done in regard to the occupation of Parga.

We come now to the last act of the tragedy. The Congress of Vienna was in session when this little republic, and the greater part of the Ionian islands, had been thus taken possession of by the English; and their policy in 1814 being to strengthen Austria, as a counterpoise both to France and to Russia, all those places would probably have been made over to that power, along with the Istrian, Dalmatian, and

Venetian provinces that were then assigned to her. But after the return of Napoleon, the tardiness of Austria, and the great influence acquired by Russia in the Congress of Paris after the victory at Waterloo, led to a different, and, in so far as the Pargiots were concerned, much more fatal arrangement. The islands were left to us: But it was agreed, in pretended conformity with the treaty of 1800, that the ex-Venetian towns on the coast should be given up unconditionally, and in full sovereignty to the Porte — or, in other words, to Ali, who took the title of its officer, and was already in possession of all of them but Parga. In conformity with this arrangement, Parga was totally extinguished, and its bare and deserted walls delivered over to the barbarian by the agents of that free government to whose honour it had committed itself! By what motives our negotiators were induced to consent to this miserable sacrifice, it would now be idle to inquire. The common opinion on the Continent is, that Lord Castlereagh was cajoled into it by the Russians, who wished to abase our national character, and to embroil us with the Turks, by making us dependent on such a neighbour as Ali for the provisioning of our forces in the islands. But for our parts, we have no great faith in those refinements of Machiavellian policy; and are of opinion, that the worst and most fatal acts of public men are far more frequently the fruit of mere ignorance and inattention, than of deep-laid schemes of perfidy or ambition. We think it by no means unlikely that the Noble Lord was actually ignorant of the compact made between our officers and the Pargiots, and are almost certain, that he was not at all aware of the vast importance of that place for the victualling of the islands which we were to retain; — while it is difficult to imagine, that he was correctly informed either as to the tenor of the treaty of 1800, on which he professed to act, or as to the events that had subsequently occurred to discharge all claims under it. Such ignorance, we certainly think, is not less criminal in a minister, than the intentional violation of his duties, which leads to the same results; but it is rather more credible; and requires to be even more loudly reprobated, both as more likely to recur, and more possible to be prevented.

We have spoken of all those occurrences in the calm and dispassionate tone of history; and trust we shall not be thought to deviate from it when we add, that an arrangement more ungenerous, cruel, and unjust to those who were the objects of it, and at once more dishonourable and injurious to those who conducted it, cannot well be imagined, than that we are now considering. In the *first* place, it was most impolitic and injurious to our interests, as possessors of the Ionian islands; because Parga was almost the only remaining channel through which they could be supplied with provisions; — and the Turk, who was known to be thirsting to regain them, would thus not only have a prodigious advantage in the event of hostilities, but would be constantly tempted to seek a pretext for hostility, in order to make use of this advantage. In the *second* place, it was in the face of a treaty recently entered into by our officers, and subsequently approved of by our commissioners in the islands, and by the Lord Bathurst, in name of the Sovereign. We know very well that it may be argued, that our officers had no proper powers to enter into such a treaty; and that the approbation of the Prince Regent, however generally expressed, should be understood as applying only to the military occupation of a place previously held by the French. But when it is considered, that the place had actually

been delivered up to us on the faith of that treaty, and retained, to our great profit, for upwards of a year, without the least surmise that any of its articles were to be objected to,—and especially that the consequence of our tardy disavowal of it was, *not* to replace things *in statu quo*, as ought to have been done upon the most rigorous application of the rules of diplomacy—but to make over to their bitterest enemy, as a property or conquest of our own, that which, but for such a treaty, we should never have had the power to dispose of—it must appear that there never was a case in which this special pleading, or quibbling rather, on the law of nations, could be resorted to with so ill a grace or so little plausibility.—But, in the *third* place, the treaty of 1800, to which we pretended to recur, had been annulled and abandoned by all the parties to it, and especially by the Turks, over and over again, from the year when it was adopted down to the year 1815. The leading stipulation in that treaty was the establishment of the Seven Islands, under the joint protection of the Porte and Russia. But, so early as 1802, the Porte admitted Great Britain as a guarantee of their independence; and, after the peace of Tilsit, they were all turned into French Colonies, with the assent of Russia. It was sufficiently manifest then, that the whole of that original treaty was abrogated and gone. If any thing more, however, was wanting, it was supplied by the transactions of 1809, when the Turks themselves concluded a peace with Bonaparte, by which they confirmed to him the whole of those conquests, including Parga, in which he had placed a garrison. Soon after, Lord Collingwood took from him Zante and Cephalonia; and the Turk then professing neutrality, our ambassador at Constantinople solemnly protested, ‘that some of the Ionian islands ‘ having been delivered from the French by our arms, without the ‘ assistance of any of the other powers by whom they should have ‘ been protected, his Majesty has a right to proceed to the settlement ‘ of those islands without consulting them—and that he will accordingly do so, if the Porte will not now renew its guarantee for their ‘ protection;’ and not only was this guarantee refused, but their pretended neutrality openly violated—not only by supplying the enemy at Corfu with stores and provisions, in defiance of our blockade, but by allowing our merchantmen to be taken and condemned as prizes by the French privateers within the bounds of the Ottoman ports and harbours. Possession was accordingly retained of these conquests, and of the others made in 1814, without any reclamation or complaint on the part of the Turks. In the Congress of that year, the basis of the whole proceeding was, that all conquests made from France by any of the allies should be at the disposal of the whole powers armed against her; but the Porte was not of this number, having all along remained at peace with Napoleon, and therefore had no right nor interest in any partition of those conquests. Accordingly, the independence of the Seven Islands, and *of their dependencies*, was expressly stipulated by several treaties signed with Prussia, Russia, Austria, and France; and, in the Congress of Paris in 1815 and 1816, the Turk had no minister or accredited agent, and was no party to their proceedings—so that nothing could be more preposterous and unmeaning, than to refer, as to a document of binding authority, to a treaty long ago and repeatedly annulled by all the parties to it—and to a stipulation in it, introduced solely for the benefit of a power that was in fact making no claim—and of whose claims it was at any rate impossible to take cog-

nissance, without utterly disregarding the very basis and foundation of the whole scheme of adjustment. If we had any right at all to dispose of Parga, it was on the supposition that we had taken it by force of arms *from France*;—but all conquests from France were to be distributed among the powers allied to control her—and the Porte neither was one of these powers, nor one of the parties assembled to deliberate on the partition. She neither had any right, nor pretended to any.

But in the *fourth* place, and finally,—if all these things had been otherwise—-if we had had no interest to keep Parga from the Turks — if they had never renounced and annulled the treaty of 1800 — if they had been belligerents allied against France, and parties to the Congress which was to dispose of what that alliance had wrested from her; we say, with the most unlimited confidence, that all this would have afforded no justification, or apology even, for the act of which we are now speaking, and would still have left it, though stripped, no doubt, of some aggravations, one of the most flagrant instances of impolicy and oppression of which history has preserved any record;—and that because what was then done in pretended implement of the treaty of 1800, *was no implement of that treaty*, but a mere sanction to the Porte to violate it in all that gave it a colour of justice, as it had already shown its determination to violate it. That treaty, no doubt, after stipulating as its main object for the independence of the Seven Islands, did also provide that the political dominion or patronage of the ex-Venetian towns on the coast should be given up to the Porte;—but then it was an integral part and express condition of this stipulation, ‘that no Mahomedan should acquire property or settle in ‘any of those towns—nor build mosques within their territory—‘nor change their laws or internal polity, nor levy taxes or duties ‘beyond those that were payable of old by the Venetians;—and that ‘the powers and functions of the bey or officer who was to attend ‘to the interest of the Ottoman in the place, should be determined to ‘the entire satisfaction of the republic of the Seven Islands.’—These were the stipulations of the treaty of 1800;—but when we thought fit to revive that treaty in 1815, and to plead the necessity of adhering to it, as a reason for disavowing the compact by which, and by which alone, we had got possession of the place in question, *we did not think fit to renew any one of these stipulations*—but gave up those who had trusted every thing to our generosity and honour, without even a recommendation to the mercy of their most inveterate enemy. Nor could we possibly suppose that these conditions would, without express stipulation, be fulfilled for Parga, which had been broken in every other quarter. Ali had taken possession of the other towns referred to in the treaty of 1800, not in virtue of that treaty, but by force of arms—and all, except one, before the treaty had been thought of. It was notorious that he had dealt with them all like conquered places—built mosques and seraglios within them—subverted the laws—alienated the property, and enslaved the people. He had afterwards made the same attempt repeatedly on Parga—and had only been prevented from reducing it to the same condition, by the valour of its inhabitants, and the extraordinary strength of its position. In these we have seen that the wisest of its citizens were still for confiding, when it was given up to us, and to our promises of protection, in 1814—and in less than two years after, it was transferred *unconditionally* to Ali, who never disguised his intention to treat it like a conquered place, nor pretended the least

regard to the stipulation in its favour contained in that treaty of 1800, in conformity to which we held ourselves bound to place it at his disposal!—Nothing, we think, but utter helplessness could have extorted from us a sacrifice so lamentable and degrading;—and if England, in the Congress of 1815, to which the Turk was not so much as a party, had actually been in such dread of the Turk as to be obliged to do an unjust and dishonourable act to appease him, we cannot help thinking, that it would have been less humiliating to have made the melancholy submission directly and openly, than to seek to disguise it under the pretence of fulfilling a treaty no longer in existence, and which we did not even attempt to enforce, in those reciprocal conditions under which alone the party to whom we yielded could ever have pretended a right to its fulfilment.

If minor considerations could have any chance of being listened to, when those higher ones had failed, it might also, one would think, have occurred, that the Porte could not be very seriously desirous to increase the power of a subject already so formidable—and that the whole history of Ali had shown, both that concessions increased his insolence, and that he could never be a good neighbour to those of whom he did not stand in awe. It is true that, like other savages, he hates those whom he is compelled to fear; but it is not less true, that fear is the only feeling by which his ferocity can be controlled. The Russian commanders always treated him with insult, and were always flattered and courted in return. One of them struck one of his Beys in his presence, upon which the tyrant quietly withdrew, and propitiated the offender with presents. In the same way, after murdering General Roze, who had treated him with uniform kindness, he submitted to the daily checks and menaces of Pouqueville, by whom he was replaced. The instances of his abusing the good nature of the English are innumerable. Having been permitted by Sir Hudson Lowe to repair two custom houses on a point opposite to our island of Santa Moro, he instantly changed them into two strong forts, with batteries commanding the island, and capable any day of reducing it. On another occasion, he seized on a citizen of Prevesa, who was brother to the contractor who supplied our troops in Santa Moro with bread, and threatened to *roast him alive* if the contractor would not give up his son to serve as an eunuch in his seraglio. This brutality was notorious in our quarters; but it was not thought fit to interfere—and the poor man was obliged to sacrifice his child to save the life of his brother. One of our own officers was afterwards fired at, and grievously wounded, by three of his soldiers—and we were satisfied with having the assassins delivered up at Parga,—to be immediately returned to their master, who continued them in his service, and employed them on the same frontier which they had polluted by so base a crime.

This strange forbearance of the English—the resort of travellers of our nation to his court—the formal visits paid him by his Majesty's commissioners, and not returned, gave an unfortunate plausibility to the false reports which he industriously circulated as to the entire devotion of our government to his views, and the bribery by which he had secured the good offices of all our commanders on the spot. He had even the audacity to print in his gazettes, that Sir Thomas Maitland had been invested with the order of the Crescent, entirely through his influence, and on account of his attachment to him and to the interests of the Porte. When it was first rumoured, therefore, at Parga, that

they were to be delivered up to their antient enemy, the most dreadful apprehensions were entertained,—and an earnest supplication addressed to the British commander in the garrison, who answered, in March 1817, by orders of Sir Thomas Maitland, that as he had not yet received the regular instructions of his government, he could give them no definitive answer; but that they might depend on his doing all in his power for their advantage, provided they did not forfeit their claim to his protection by any violence or bloodshed on their own part.

The substance of the arrangement was now generally known; and as nobody doubted, or affected to doubt, of the manner in which Ali was to treat the place when made over to him, the humanity and honour of our commissioners could suggest nothing farther than to offer an asylum in the islands to such of the citizens as might not be disposed to remain, and to stipulate that Ali, on behalf of the Turkish government, should pay a fair price for the lands, buildings, and plantations that might be thus deserted by their owners;—and Sir Thomas Maitland accordingly authorized the British commander to exhibit a letter, in which ‘he pledged himself that the place should not be yielded up till the property of those who might choose to emigrate should be paid for, and they themselves transported to the Ionian Islands;’ and a proclamation was afterwards published at Parga, in which the same obligations are expressly undertaken in name of the British government. Ali did not venture openly to oppose a measure of justice, thus powerfully supported and enforced; and appointed Hamed Bey to act as his commissioner in making the necessary surveys and valuations along with Mr. Cartwright, who was named on behalf of our Government. But he had recourse to every resource of intimidation and chicane to prevent it from being brought to a conclusion. Mr. Cartwright applied to the British commander in the citadel, to give him a general idea of the total value of the possessions that might be left; and was answered, that, on the supposition that the whole people were to emigrate, it would probably amount to between 400,000 and 500,000*l.* sterling. The commander afterwards directed a particular survey and valuation to be made of the lands, houses, and plantations, and found that the total considerably exceeded the largest of the sums which we have mentioned. These valuations, however, were objected to, as having been made without proper authority; and something less than a third part was ultimately awarded. In the mean time, Ali surrounded the city with his troops—insisted on his commissioner being received with fifty horsemen—and not only did all he could to seduce some of the lower citizens to rise upon the English garrison, and admit him unconditionally into the town; but proposed to them to poison our water and provisions; and reported to every one, that he never would pay one farthing, but would shortly make good his entry by force, and that the Divan had agreed with Sir Robert Liston to give our generals 60,000*l.* to put a stop to the plan of emigration; and this produced such a panic and alarm in the settlement, that scarcely any one would proceed with the cultivation of his fields: and a great proportion sold their neglected lots at an undervalue to greedy adventurers. The commissioners, however, at last met in June 1816, and soon after published each of them a proclamation,—ours repeating so far the assurances of a safe-conduct and fair compensation for the property of those who might chuse to emigrate, but leaving the question of emigration to their own free and

unbiassed determination — and that of Hamed urging the citizens to remain in their native town, and declaring that they should enjoy all liberty, security, and comfort ; — although, when urged by our officers, as well as the Pargiots, to put his name and seal to this declaration, he positively refused to do so, and would give no further explanation. After these proclamations had been circulated for some days, all the citizens of Parga were brought, one by one, before the two commissioners, and called upon, with much solemnity, to declare their final resolution, — when they *every one* answered, ‘ that they were resolved to ‘ abandon their country, rather than stay in it with dishonour ; and ‘ that they would each disinter and carry along with them the bones ‘ of their forefathers.’

The commissioners then proceeded to their surveys and valuations ; but they soon differed with each other, and with the Governor, and were respectively superseded. A conference then took place between Ali and General Maitland in October, which resulted in a suspension of all proceedings till May 1818, when a new commissioner was appointed on our part, before whom, and the agent of Ali, the whole citizens again repeated their fixed determination to leave their country, in the same terms as in the preceding year ; and new disputes arose about the mode of valuing the churches, public buildings, and property belonging to incorporations. The Pargiots, who were now reduced to the greatest distress, sent over a statement of their case, with the necessary documents, to be laid before the British Parliament ; but having addressed them to a person who was not a British subject, he did not think himself entitled to make any formal application in their name, though we have reason to believe, that the notice which has been taken of their case in Parliament originated in this communication. In the mean time, the proceedings went tardily on ; and at last, in June 1819, General Maitland, in consequence of the depreciation of property by the neglect and despair of its owners, finally declared the compensation to be paid by Ali, for the Turkish government, to be 142,425*l.* sterling ; and, shortly after, intimated to the citizens, that he was ready to provide for their transportation to the islands.

As soon as this notice was given, every family marched solemnly out of its dwelling, without tears or lamentation ; and the men, preceded by their priests, and followed by their sons, proceeded to the sepulchres of their fathers, and silently unearthed and collected their remains, — which they placed upon a huge pile of wood which they had previously erected before one of their churches. They then took their arms in their hands, and setting fire to the pile, stood motionless and silent around it, till the whole was consumed. During this melancholy ceremony, some of Ali’s troops, impatient for possession, approached the gates of the town ; upon which a deputation of the citizens was sent to inform our Governor, that if a single Infidel was admitted before the remains of their ancestors were secured from profanation, and they themselves, with their families, fairly embarked, they would all instantly put to death their wives and children, and die with their arms in their hands, — and not without a bloody revenge on those who had bought and sold their country. Such a remonstrance, at such a moment, was felt and respected as it ought by those to whom it was addressed. General Adam succeeded in stopping the march of the Mussulmans. The pile burnt out, and the people embarked in silence ; and free and Christian Parga is now a strong hold of ruffians, renegadoes, and slaves.

PARTITIONS OF POLAND.*

THE three works which are now before us contain particulars of the Partitions of Poland which have not hitherto been made public in our language, and which, besides their importance to the general readers of history, seem to us peculiarly interesting in the present state of Europe. We shall therefore take this occasion to lay before the public an abridged statement of some of the most important of these particulars; after premising a short account of the witnesses on whose testimony our narrative will principally be founded.

The Memoirs of M. V. Dohm begin in 1778, and are meant to reach till 1806, during the whole of which time he filled a secondary, but not unimportant, office under the Government of Prussia. After the French conquest in 1806, he became a subject of the short-lived kingdom of Westphalia, under which he held office (as he now tells us) unwillingly till 1810, when he obtained permission to retire, and employed his leisure in the composition of these Memoirs, of which the Part hitherto published extends only to the death of the Great Frederic in 1786,—the least interesting and best known portion of the period in Prussian history which the work is designed to comprehend.

No. 2. is a History of the Three Dismemberments of Poland, by M. Ferrand, formerly a magistrate of the Parliament of Paris, one of the most zealous Royalists of the old school, an enemy of liberty, but a friend of national independence, who, though a warm admirer of the Holy Alliance, yet honestly, but not consistently, reprobates the Partition of Poland as the first step towards the dissolution of the European system. The most valuable part of this publication consists in extracts from the Notes and Collections of Rulhieres, which were intended by that writer as materials for the continuation of his brilliant work. The value of these extracts, and of the general narration, would have been greatly increased, had the author deigned minutely to quote authorities, and to particularize the dates of events; securities for literary probity which we have seldom found in modern French histories, except in the works of M. Sismondi, and in the invaluable History of Venice, by M. Daru; a book which contains more information, new to most readers, than has been presented to the public by any European historian of late years.

No. 3. is a Collection of Diplomatic Correspondence between the three Governments who partitioned Poland, from 1771 to 1774, published anonymously at Weimar in 1810, by the Count de Goertz, for many years employed in some of the eminent stations of Prussian diplomacy. The authenticity and importance of these documents are equally indisputable.

Little more than fifty years have passed since Poland continued to occupy a high place among the powers of Europe. Her natural means of wealth and force were inferior to those of few states of the second order. The surface of the country exceeded that of France; and the

* 1. *Denkwürdigkeiten Meiner Zeit.* Von C. W. V. Dohm. 5 Vols. 8vo. Lemgo u. Hanover. 1814—1819. 2. *Histoire des trois Démembrements de la Pologne.* Par M. Ferrand. 3 Vols. 8vo. Paris, 1820. 3. *Memoires et Actes Authentiques relatifs aux Negociations qui ont précédées le Partage de la Pologne.* (Without the name of the Author, or the Place of Publication.) 1 Vol. 8vo. 1810.—Vol. xxxvii. page 462. November, 1822.

number of inhabitants was estimated at fourteen millions — a population probably exceeding that of the British Islands, or of the Spanish Peninsula, at the era of the first Partition. The climate was nowhere unfriendly to health, or unfavourable to labour; the soil was fertile, the produce redundant: a large portion of the country, still uncleared, afforded ample scope for agricultural enterprise. Great rivers afforded easy means of opening an internal navigation from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. In addition to these natural advantages, there were many of those circumstances in the history and situation of Poland which render a people fond and proud of their country, and foster that national spirit which is the most effectual instrument either of defence or aggrandizement. Till the middle of the seventeenth century, she was the predominating power of the North. With Hungary, and the maritime strength of Venice, she formed the eastern defence of Christendom against the Turkish tyrants of Greece; and, on the north-east, she was long the sole barrier against the more obscure barbarians of Muscovy, after they had thrown off the Tartarian yoke.* A nation which thus constituted a part of the van-guard of civilization, necessarily became martial, and gained all the renown in arms which could be acquired before war had become a science. The wars of the Poles, irregular, romantic, full of personal adventure, dependent on individual courage and peculiar character, proceeding little from the policy of Cabinets, but deeply imbued by those sentiments of chivalry which may pervade a nation, chequered by extraordinary vicissitudes, carried on against barbarous enemies in remote and wild provinces, were calculated to leave a deep impression on the feelings of the people, and to give every man the liveliest interest in the glories and dangers of his country. Whatever renders the members of a community more like each other, and unlike their neighbours, usually strengthens the bonds of attachment between them. The Poles were the only representatives of the Sarmatian race in the assembly of civilized nations. Their language and their national literature — those great sources of sympathy and objects of national pride — were cultivated with no small success. They contributed, in one instance, signally to the progress of science; and they took no ignoble part in those classical studies which composed the common literature of Europe. They were bound to their country by the peculiarities of its institutions and usages — perhaps also, by the very defects in their government, which at last contributed to its fall, by those dangerous privileges, and by that tumultuary independence which rendered their condition as much above that of the slaves of absolute monarchy, as it was below the lot of those who inherit the blessings of legal and moral freedom. They had once another singularity, of which they might justly have been proud, if they had not abandoned it in times which ought to have been more enlightened. Soon after the Reformation, they set the first example of that true religious liberty which equally admits the members of all sects to the privileges, the offices, and dignities of the commonwealth.†

* ‘Poloniam velut Propugnaculum orbis Christiani.’ — ‘Polonia Germaniam ab irruptionibus BARBARORUM tutam præstitit.’ — *Puffendorff Rerum Brandenburgicarum*, l. v. c. 31.

† At the Diets of 1563, 1568, and 1569, *Art. de verifier les Dates*, ii. 74. It is at the same time that we find them describing the variety of their religious

For nearly a century, they afforded a secure asylum to those obnoxious sects of Anabaptists and Unitarians, whom all other States excluded from toleration; and the Hebrew nation, proscribed every where else for several ages, found a second country, with protection for their learned and religious establishments, in this hospitable and tolerant land.

A body of gentry, amounting to about half a million, professing the equality of gentlemen amidst the utmost extremes of affluence and poverty, forming at once the legislature and the army, or rather constituting the commonwealth, were reproached, perhaps justly, with the parade, dissipation, and levity which generally characterize the masters of slaves; but their faculties were roused by ambition — they felt the dignity of conscious independence — and they joined to the brilliant valour of their ancestors an uncommon degree of the accomplishments and manners of a polished age. Even in the days of her decline, Poland had still a part allotted to her in the European system. By her mere situation, without any activity on her part, she in some measure prevented the collision and preserved the balance of the three greatest military powers of the Continent. She constituted an essential member of the federative system of France; and, by her vicinity to Turkey, and influence on the commerce of the Baltic, directly affected the general interest of Europe. Her preservation was one of the few parts of continental policy in which both France and England were concerned; and all the governments of Europe dreaded the aggrandizement of her neighbours.

In these circumstances, it might have been thought that the dismemberment of the territory of a numerous, brave, antient, and renowned people, passionately devoted to their native land, without colour of right or pretext of offence, in a period of profound peace, in defiance of the law of nations, and of the common interest of all states, was an event not much more probable than that the same vast country should be swallowed up by a convulsion of nature. After such an occurrence, no State can consider herself as safe. Before that dismemberment, indeed, nations were exposed to the evils of war and the chance of conquest; but in peace they placed some reliance on each other's faith; and even in the utmost dangers of war they relied on the prevalence of that established policy which then disposed every nation to prevent the entire destruction of any other. The crime has, however, been triumphantly consummated. The principle of the balance of power perished in the Partition of Poland; and nations have, since that example, looked even in peace on their neighbours as conspirators secretly plotting their destruction. The system of Partition has been continued down to the present moment, by its original authors. It has been copied by their enemies; and the very powers who dismembered Poland are now the allies of England, and the masters of every part of the Continent, except France and Spain.

The succession to the Crown of Poland appears, in antient times, to have been governed by that rude combination of inheritance and

sects — ‘*Nos qui sumus DISSIDENTES in Religione.*’ The term Dissidents then included the Catholics as well as all other Christian sects. The Unitarians were first excluded about 1650. The subsequent exclusion of the Greeks and Protestants, who were dissenters from the Establishment, was one of the immediate causes of the ruin of Poland.

election which originally prevailed in most European monarchies, where there was a general inclination to respect hereditary claims, and even the occasional elections were confined to the members of the reigning family. Had not the male heirs of the House of Jagellon been extinct, or had the rule of female succession been introduced, it is probable that the Polish monarchy would have become strictly hereditary. The inconveniences of elective monarchy chiefly arose in Poland from the admission of powerful foreign princes as candidates for the Crown. That form of government proved rather injurious to the independence, than to the internal peace of the country. More than a century, indeed, elapsed before the mischief was felt. In spite of the ascendant acquired by Sweden in the affairs of the North, Poland still maintained a high rank; and her last great exertion, when John Sobieski drove the Turkish barbarians from the gates of Vienna, (in 1683,) was worthy of her antient character as the guardian of Christendom. The death of the great Sobieski (1696) first showed, that the admission of powerful foreign candidates for the Crown might lead to the introduction of foreign influence, and even foreign arms, into the kingdom. The contest which then occurred between the Prince of Conti and Augustus Elector of Saxony, seemed only to prolong the interregnum beyond its usual term; but it was decided in favour of the latter Prince, by his Saxon army and by Russian influence. Charles XII. attacked by a formidable confederacy in his extreme youth, and having, in his eighteenth year, compelled Denmark to submit, and defeated a great Russian army, turned his victorious arms against Poland, entered Warsaw in triumph before he had reached the age of twenty, deposed the Elector of Saxony as a usurper, raised to the Royal dignity by foreign force, and obliged that Prince, by express treaty, to renounce his pretensions to the Crown. He was doubtless impelled to these measures by the insolence of a youthful conqueror, and by resentment against the Elector; but he was also influenced by those rude conceptions of justice, sometimes degenerating into cruelty, which were blended with his irregular ambition. He had the generosity, however, to spare the territory of the republic, and the good sense to propose the son of the great Sobieski to fill the vacant throne; a proposal which, had it been successful, might have banished foreign factions, by gradually conferring on a Polish family an hereditary claim to the Crown. But the Saxons, foreseeing such a measure, carried away young Sobieski a prisoner. Charles bestowed the Crown on Stanislaus Leczinski, a Polish gentleman of worth and talent, but destitute of the genius and boldness which the public dangers required; and the King of Sweden, who thus set the example of a second King enthroned by a foreign army, struck another blow at the independence of Poland. The treaty of Alt-Ranstadt was soon after annulled by the battle of Pultowa; and Augustus renewed the pretensions which he had solemnly renounced, and returned triumphantly to Warsaw. The ascendant of the Czar was for a moment suspended by the treaty of Pruth (in 1711), where the Turks compelled Peter to swear that he would withdraw his troops from Poland, and never interfere in the internal affairs of that republic. As soon, however, as the Porte were engaged in a war with Austria, the Czar marched an army into Poland (in 1717), and exhibited the first example of a compromise between the King and the Diet, under the mediation of a Russian ambassador, and surrounded by Russian troops.

The death of Augustus (in 1733) had nearly occasioned a general war throughout Europe. The interest of Stanislaus, the deposed King, was espoused by France, partly perhaps because Louis XV. had married his daughter, but chiefly because the cause of the new Elector of Saxony, who was his competitor, was supported by Austria, the ally of England, and by Russia, which was then closely connected with Austria. The Court of Petersburg then set up the fatal pretext of a guarantee of the Polish constitution, founded on the transactions of 1717. A guarantee of the territories and rights of one independent State against others, is perfectly compatible with justice. But a guarantee of the institutions of a people against themselves, is but another name for dependence on the foreign power which enforces it. In pursuance of this pretended guarantee, the country was invaded by sixty thousand Russians, who ravaged with fire and sword every district which opposed their progress; and, being unable to reach the regular place of election by the last day which the law allowed, compelled a handful of gentlemen, some of them in chains, whom they brought together in a forest near Warsaw, to elect Augustus the Third.

Henceforward Russia treated Poland as a vassal State. The nation indeed disappeared from the European system; she was the subject of wars and negociations, but no longer a party engaged in them. Under Augustus III., she was almost as much without government at home, as without influence abroad. For thirty years she slumbered in a state of pacific anarchy, which is almost without example in history. The Diets of the republic were regularly assembled, conformably to the laws; but every one of these assemblies, during the whole of that long period, was dissolved, without adopting a single measure of legislation or government. This extraordinary suspension of public authority arose from the privilege which each nuncio possessed, of stopping any public measure, by declaring his dissent from it, known throughout Europe as the *Liberum Veto*—expressed in Polish by the words ‘*Nie poswalam,*’—‘I cannot consent.’ To give a satisfactory account of the origin and progress of this anomalous privilege would probably require more industrious and critical research than were applied to the subject when Polish antiquaries and lawyers existed.* Generally speaking, the absolute negative enjoyed by every member of the Polish Diet seems to have arisen from the principle, that the Nuncios were not representatives, but ministers; that their power of acting was limited by the imperative instructions of the provinces; that the constitution was rather a confederacy than a commonwealth; and the Diet not so much a deliberative assembly, as a meeting of delegates, whose whole duty consisted in declaring the determination of their respective constituents. Of such a state of things unanimity seemed the natural consequence. But as the sovereign power was really vested in the gentry, they were authorized, by the laws of the republic, to interfere in public affairs in a manner most inconvenient and hazardous, though rendered in some measure necessary by the unreasonable institution of unanimity. This interference was effected by that species of legal insurrection called a Confederation, in which

* We have sought in vain for a legal and constitutional account of these singular usages. The information on this subject in *Lengnich Jus Publicum Poloniæ* is so vague and unsatisfactory, that, after having taken some trouble to procure it, we abstain from troubling our readers with it.

any number of gentlemen subscribing the Alliance bound themselves to pursue, by force of arms, its avowed object, either of defending the country, or preserving the laws, or maintaining the privileges of any class of citizens. It was equally lawful for another body of noblemen to associate themselves against the former. The war between them was legitimate. Neither party were treated as rebels, for both were composed of members of the sovereign class, or rather, both were composed of a number of separate sovereigns, whose ordinary union was so loose and frail, that it seemed scarcely a departure from its principle to adopt, for a time, a closer alliance with a chosen party of their fellow-nobles. In these Confederations, the sovereign power released itself from the restraint of unanimity; and in order to obtain that liberty, the Diet sometimes resolved itself into a Federation; in which case, they lost little by being obliged to rely on the zeal of voluntary adherents, more than on the legal obedience of citizens. This last expedient, of converting the ordinary into a Confederate Diet, is perhaps the most singular example in history of a Legislative Assembly assuming the form of a party in civil war, in order to escape from the restraints of an inconvenient law.

On the death of Augustus III., it pleased the Empress Catharine II. to appoint Stanislaus Poniatowski, one of her discarded lovers, to the vacant throne; a man who possessed many of the qualities and accomplishments which are attractive in private life; but who, when he was exposed to the tests of elevated station and public danger, proved to be utterly void of all dignity and energy. Several circumstances in the state of Europe enabled Catharine to bestow the Crown on Poniatowski, without resistance from foreign powers. France was unwilling to expose herself so early to the hazard of a new war. She was restrained by her recent alliance with Austria; and the unexpected death of the Elector of Saxony deprived the Courts of Versailles and Vienna of the competitor whom they could support with most hope of success against the influence of the Czarina. Frederic II., abandoned, or (as he himself with reason thought) betrayed by England*, found himself, at the general peace, without an ally, exposed to the deserved resentment of Austria, and no longer with any hope of aid from France, which had become the friend of his natural enemy. In this situation, he thought it necessary to court the friendship of Catharine; and in the beginning of the year 1764 concluded a defensive alliance with her, of which the stipulations with respect to Poland were, that they were to oppose every attempt either to make that Crown hereditary, or to strengthen the Royal powers; that they were to unite in securing the election of Stanislaus Poniatowski; and that they were to protect the Dissidents of the Greek and Protestant Communions, who, since the year 1717, had been deprived of that equal admissibility to public office which was bestowed on them by the liberality of the antient laws. The former part of these stipulations was intended to perpetuate the confusions of Poland, and to ensure her dependence on her neighbours; the latter afforded a specious pretext for constant interference, and secured the support of a party whom the injustice of their own

* Mem. de 1763 à 1775, Introduction. Frederic charges the new Administration of Geo. III., not only with breach of treaty in making peace without him, but with secretly offering to regain Silesia for Maria Theresa, and with labouring to embroil Peter III. with Prussia.

Government threw into the arms of foreign powers. Catharine, in a Declaration delivered at Warsaw, asserted, ‘*that she did nothing but in virtue of the right of vicinage, acknowledged by all nations**;’ and on another occasion she observed, ‘*that justice and humanity were the sole rules of her conduct*;’ and that HER VIRTUES ALONE HAD PLACED ‘HER ON THE THRONE.’† It is proper to add, that all the powerful neighbours of Poland then made declarations, which, when considered in contrast with their subsequent conduct, are sufficient to teach mankind how far they may trust to the sincerity, faith, and honour of absolute monarchs. On the 24th of January 1764, Frederic declared, that ‘he should constantly labour to *defend* the States of the Republic ‘in their INTEGRITY.’ On the 16th of March, in the same year, Maria Theresa, a sovereign celebrated for piety and justice, assured the Polish Government of ‘her resolution to *maintain* the Republic in all ‘her rights, prerogatives, and POSSESSIONS.’ On the 23d of May, even Catharine herself, when Poland, for the first time, acknowledged her title of Empress of *all* the Russias, granted to the Republic ‘a SOLEMN GUARANTEE OF ALL HER POSSESSIONS‡’! Though the Poles were abandoned by their allies, and distracted by divisions, they made a gallant stand against the appointment of the discarded lover of a foreign princess to be their King. One party, at the head of which was the illustrious House of Czartorinski, by supporting the influence of Russia, and the election of Stanislaus, hoped to obtain the power of reforming the constitution, of abolishing the veto, and giving due strength to the Crown. The other, more generous, though less enlightened, spurned at foreign interference, and made the most vigorous efforts to assert independence, but were unhappily averse to reforms of the constitution, wedded to antient abuses, and resolutely determined to exclude their fellow-citizens of different religions from equal privileges. The leaders of the latter party were the great General Branicki, a veteran of Roman dignity and intrepidity, and Prince Radzivil, a youth of almost regal revenue and dignity, who, by a singular combination of valour and generosity, with violence and wildness, exhibited a striking picture of a Sarmatian grandee. The events which passed in the interregnum, as they are related by Rulhieres, form one of the most interesting parts of modern history. The variety of character, the elevation of mind, and the vigour of talent exhibited in the fatal struggle which then began, afford a memorable proof of the superiority of the worst aristocracy over the best administered absolute monarchy. In the contest among many masters of slaves, they check or excite each other, genius and valour are called forth, and many qualities are formed which approach to great virtues. But where there is only one master of slaves, he is neither animated by competitors, nor controlled by opponents, while every other man is debased by submission. The most turbulent aristocracy, with all its disorders and insecurity, must contain a certain number of men who respect themselves, and who have some scope for the free exercise of genius and virtue.

In spite of all the efforts of generous patriotism, a Diet, surrounded by a Russian army, were compelled to elect Stanislaus. The Princes Czartorinski expected to reign under the name of their nephew; they

* Rulhieres, ii. 41.

† Ibid. ii. 151.

‡ Ferrand. I. et Pieces Justific.

had carried through their reforms so dexterously as to be almost unobserved; but Catharine had too deep an interest in the anarchy of Poland not to watch over its preservation. She availed herself of the prejudices of the party most adverse to her, and obliged the Diet to abrogate the reforms. The Russian ambassadors were her viceroys in Poland; Keyserling, a crafty and smooth German jurist; Saldern, a desperate adventurer, banished from Holstein for forgery; and Repnin, a haughty and brutal Muscovite, were selected, perhaps from the variety of their character, to suit the fluctuating circumstances of the country; but all of them spoke in that tone of authority which has ever since continued to distinguish the Russian diplomacy. Prince Czartorinski was desirous not to be present in the Diet when his measures were repealed; but Repnin told him, that if he were not, his palaces should be burnt, and his estates laid waste. Czartorinski understood this system of Muscovite canvass, and submitted to the humiliation of proposing to abrogate those reformatations which he thought essential to the existence of the Republic.

The Russian and Prussian ministers presented notes in favour of the Dissidents in September 1764*, and afterwards urged the claims of that body more fully to the Diet of 1766, when they were seconded with honest intentions, though perhaps with a doubtful right of interference, by Great Britain, Denmark, and Sweden, as parties to the treaty of Oliva, or as guarantees of that important treaty, the foundation of the political system of the north of Europe. The Diet, influenced by the unnatural union of an intolerant spirit, with a generous indignation against foreign interference, rejected all these solicitations, though they were undoubtedly agreeable to the principle of the treaty of Oliva, and though some of them proceeded from powers who could not be suspected of unfriendly intentions. In 1767, the Dissidents were unhappily prevailed upon to enter into confederations for the recovery of their antient rights, and thus to furnish a pretext for the armed interference of Russia. Forty thousand Russians entered Poland under pretence of protecting the Confederated Dissidents. In order to embroil the affairs of that distracted country still more irretrievably, Catharine now affected to espouse the cause of the Republicans who had resisted the election of Stanislaus. Prince Radzivil returned from his exile. A general confederation of malcontents was formed under his auspices at Radom, but surrounded by Russian troops, and subject to the orders of the brutal Repnin. That capricious barbarian used his power with such insolence as soon to provoke general resistance. He prepared for a subservient Diet by the utmost excesses of military violence at the elections, and by threats of banishment to Siberia held out to every one whose opposition he dreaded. The Diet, which met on the 4th October, 1767, showed strong symptoms of independence. The means adopted by Repnin to subdue the obstinacy of that Assembly are described by Rulhieres in one of the most striking passages of his eloquent work.†

The Diet were at length intimidated; and Repnin obtained their consent to a treaty with Russia‡, stipulating for the equal admission of all religious sects to civil offices, containing a reciprocal guarantee ‘ *of the integrity of the territories of both powers in the most SOLEMN and*

* Martens Recueil, i. 340.

† Rulhieres, ii. 466. 470.

‡ Martens, iv. 582.

‘ *SACRED manner* ;’ confirming the constitution of Poland, especially the fatal law of unanimity, with a few alterations recently made by the Diet, and placing this ‘ Constitution, with the Government, LIBERTY, and RIGHTS of Poland, under the guarantee of her Imperial Majesty, who most solemnly promises to preserve the republic for ever entire.’ Thus, under the pretence of religious liberty, the disorder and feebleness of Poland were perpetuated, and the principle of guarantee once more applied to internal institutions, to the absolute and total destruction of all remains of independence. Frederic II., an accomplice in these crimes, describes their immediate effect with the truth and coolness of an unconcerned spectator. ‘ So many acts of sovereignty,’ says he, ‘ exercised by a foreign power on the territory of the republic, at length excited universal indignation ;—the offensive measures were not softened by the arrogance of Prince Repnin ;—enthusiasm seized the minds of all, and the grandees availed themselves of the fanaticism and of their followers and serfs, to throw of a yoke which had become insupportable.’* In this temper of the nation, the Diet rose on the 6th of March 1768, and with it expired the confederation of Radom, which furnished the second example, within five years, of a Polish party so blind to experience as to become the dupes of Russia. A confederation was immediately formed at Bar† in Podolia, for the preservation of religion and liberty, which, in a moment, spread over the whole kingdom. The Russian officers hesitated for a moment whether they could take a part in this intestine war. Repnin, by pronouncing the word *Siberia*, compelled those members of the Senate who were at Warsaw to claim the aid of Russia, notwithstanding the dissent of the Czartorinskis and their friends, who protested against that inglorious and ruinous determination. The events of the war between Russia, and the confederation which followed, it is not our province to relate. On the part of Russia, it presents a series of acts of treachery, falsehood, rapacity, and cruelty, not unworthy of Cæsar Borgia. The resistance of the Poles, an undisciplined and almost unarmed people, betrayed by their King and Senate, in a country without fastnesses or fortifications, where the enemy had already established themselves at every important point, forms one of the most glorious, though the most unfortunate, of the struggles of mankind for their rights. The Council of the Confederation established themselves at Eperies, within the frontier of Hungary, with the connivance and secret favour of Austria. Some French officers, and aid in money from Versailles and Constantinople, added something to their strength and more to their credit. Repnin entered into a negotiation with them, and proposed an armistice, till he could procure reinforcements. Old Pulauski, the first leader of the Confederation, objected. ‘ There is no word,’ said he, ‘ in the Russian language for honour.’ The event speedily showed that the word would have been altogether superfluous. Repnin, as soon as he was reinforced, laughed at the armistice, fell upon the Confederates, and laid waste the lands of all true Poles with fire and sword. The Cossacks brought to Repnin’s house at Warsaw, Polish gentlemen tied to the tail of their horses, and dragged in this manner along the ground.‡ A Russian Colonel, named Drewitz, seems to have surpassed all his comrades in ferocity. Not content with

* Mem. de 1763 jusqu’ à 1775.

† See their Manifesto. Martens, i. 456.

‡ Rulhieres, iii. 55.

massacring the gentlemen to whom quarter had been given, he inflicted on them the punishments invented in Russia for slaves; sometimes tying them to trees as a mark for his soldiers to fire at; sometimes scorching certain parts of their skin, so as to represent the national dress of Poland; sometimes dispersing them over the provinces, after he had cut off their hands, arms, nose, or ears, as living examples of the punishment suffered by those who loved their country.* It is remarkable, that this ferocious monster, then the hero of the Muscovite army, was deficient in the common quality of military courage. Peter had not civilized the Russians. That was an undertaking beyond even his genius, and inconsistent with his ferocious character. He only armed a barbarous people with the arts of civilized war.

But no valour could have enabled the Confederates of Bar to resist the power of Russia for four years, if they had not been seconded by certain important changes in the political system of Europe, which at first raised a powerful diversion in their favour, but at length proved the immediate cause of the dismemberment of Poland. These changes may be dated from the alliance of France with Austria in 1756, and still more from the peace of 1762. On the day on which the Duke de Choiseul signed the preliminaries of peace at Fontainebleau, he entered into a secret convention with Spain, by which it was agreed that the war should be renewed against England in eight years; a time which was thought sufficient to repair the exhausted strength of the two Bourbon monarchies.† The hostility of the French minister to England was at that time extreme. ‘If I were master,’ said he, ‘we should act towards England as Spain did to the Moors. If we really adopted that system, England would, in thirty years, be reduced and destroyed.’‡ Soon after, however, his vigilance was directed to other quarters by projects which threatened to deprive France of her accustomed and due influence in the north and east of Europe. He was incensed at Catharine for not resuming the alliance with Austria, and the war which had been abruptly suspended by the caprice of her unfortunate husband; and she, on the other hand, soon after she was seated on the throne, had formed one of those vast and apparently chimerical plans to which absolute power and immense territory have familiarized the minds of Russian sovereigns. She laboured to counteract the influence of France, which she considered as the chief obstacle to her ambition, on all the frontiers of her empire, in Sweden, Poland, and Turkey, by the formation of a great alliance of the North, to consist of England, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, and Poland, Russia being of course the head of the league.§ Choiseul exerted himself in every quarter to defeat this project, or rather to be revenged on Catharine for attempts which were already defeated by their own extravagance and vastness. In Sweden, his plan for reducing the Russian influence was successfully resisted in 1768; but the Revolution accomplished by

* Rulhieres, iii. 124. See also Annual Register, &c.

† Ferrand, i. 76. The failure of this perfidious project is to be ascribed to the decline of Choiseul’s influence, which preceded his downfall. The affair of Falkland’s Islands was a fragment of the design.

‡ Despatch from M. de Choiseul to M. D’Ossun at Madrid, 5th April 1762. Flissan. Dip. Franc. vi. 466. About *thirty years* afterwards, the French monarchy was destroyed.

§ Rulhieres, ii. 310. Ferrand, i. 75.

Gustavus III. in 1772, re-established the French ascendant in that kingdom. The Count de Vergennes, ambassador at Constantinople, opened the eyes of the Sultan on the ambitious projects of Catharine in Sweden, in Poland, and in the Crimea. The strongest assurances of powerful aid were held out by France, which, had Choiseul remained in power, would probably have been carried into effect. By all these means, Vergennes persuaded the Porte to declare war against Russia on the 30th of October 1768.* The Confederates of Bar, who had established themselves in the neighbourhood of the Turkish as well as of the Austrian provinces, now received open assistance from the Turks. The Russian arms were fully occupied in the Turkish war; a Russian fleet entered the Mediterranean; the agents of the Court of Petersburg excited a revolt among the Greeks, whom they afterwards treacherously and cruelly abandoned to the vengeance of their Turkish tyrants. These events suspended the fate of Poland. French officers of distinguished merit and gallantry guided the valour of the undisciplined Confederates.† Austria seemed to countenance, if not openly to support them. Supplies and reinforcements from France passed openly through Vienna into Poland‡; and Maria Theresa herself publicly declared, that there was no principle or honour in Poland but among the Confederates. But the Turkish war, which had raised up an important ally for the struggling Poles, was in the end destined to be the cause of their destruction.

At this period began the complicated intrigues which terminated in the first dismemberment of Poland. The facts on this subject have been variously represented; but we shall not examine the controversies to which they have given rise, contenting ourselves with a short statement of what the original papers published by M. Goertz seem to us to establish beyond the possibility of dispute. These papers, it is not a little remarkable, that M. Ferrand appears not to have known. They agree with the Memoirs of Prince Henry of Prussia — with the Introduction to the Letters of Viomenil — with the Memoirs of Dohm, and, in the main, with the Narrative of Frederic II., who, in his account of these events, shows a sort of frank effrontery, which, however dishonourable to his character as a man, is rather favourable to his testimony as a witness. He does not seem to think his immoralities worth concealing.

The events of war had brought the Russian armies into the neighbourhood of the Austrian dominions, and began to fill the Court of Vienna with apprehensions for the security of Hungary. Frederic had no desire that his ally should become stronger. Both the great Courts of Germany were averse to the extension of the Russian territories at the expense of Turkey. Frederic was restrained from opposing it forcibly by his treaty with Catharine, who continued to be his sole ally.

* Flassan. *Diplom. Française*, vii. 83. Vergennes was immediately recalled, notwithstanding this success, for having lowered (*deconsiderée*) himself by marrying the daughter of a physician. He brought back with him the three millions (120,000*l.* sterling) which had been remitted to him to bribe the Divan, — a proof of their disinterestedness, and of his integrity. Catharine called him '*Mustapha's Prompter*.'

† Rulhieres. Ferrand. *Lettres de Viomenil*, Paris, 1807. *Memoires de Dumourier*.

‡ *Memoires de l'Abbé Georgel*, 1.

Kaunitz, who ruled the councils of Vienna, still adhered to the French alliance, and continued to feel great apprehensions of such a neighbour on the eastern frontier, as Russia. He seconded the French negotiations at Constantinople; and even so late as the month of July 1771, entered into a secret treaty with Turkey, by which Austria bound herself to recover from Russia, by negociation or by force, all the conquests made by that power from the Porte. But there is reason to think, that Kaunitz, distrusting the power and the inclination of France under the feeble government of Louis XV., and still less disposed to rely on the counsels of Versailles after the downfall of Choiseul in December 1770, though he did not wish to dissolve the alliance, was desirous of loosening its ties; and became gradually disposed to adopt any expedient against the danger of Russian aggrandizement, which might relieve him from the necessity of engaging in a war, in which his chief confidence must necessarily have rested on so weak a stay as the French government. Maria Theresa still entertained a rooted aversion against Frederic, whom she never forgave for robbing her of Silesia; and openly professed her abhorrence of the vices and crimes of Catharine, whom she never spoke of but in a tone of disgust, as ‘*that woman.*’ Her son Joseph, however, affected to admire, and, as far as he had power, to imitate the King of Prussia; and, in spite of his mother’s repugnance, found means to begin a personal intercourse with that celebrated monarch. Their first interview took place at Neiss in Silesia, in August 1769, where they entered into a secret engagement to prevent the Russians from retaining Moldavia and Walachia. In September 1770, a second interview took place at Neustadt in Moravia, where the principal subject seems also to have been the means of stopping the progress of Russian conquest, and where despatches were received from Constantinople, desiring the mediation of both Courts in the negotiations for a peace.* But these interviews, though they lessened those jealousies and antipathies which stood in the way of concert between the two German courts, do not appear to have directly influenced their system respecting Poland.† The mediation, however, then solicited, ultimately gave rise to that fatal proposition. Frederic had proposed a plan for the pacification of Poland, on condition of reasonable terms being made with the Confederates; and of the Dissidents being induced to moderate their demands. Austria had assented to this plan, and was willing that Russia should make an honourable peace, but insisted on the restitution of Moldavia and Walachia; and declared, that if her mediation were slighted, she must at length yield to the instances of France, and take an active part for

* *Memoires de Frederic II.* Mem. de 1763, jusqu’ à 1775.

† It was at one time believed, that the project of Partition was first suggested to Joseph by Frederic at Neustadt, if not at Neiss. Goertz’s Papers demonstrate the contrary. These papers are supported by Viomenil, by the testimony of Prince Henry, by Rulhieres, and by the narrative of Frederic. Dohm and Schoell have also shown the impossibility of this supposition. Mr. Coxe (*Hist. House of Austr.* iii. 499.) has indeed adopted it, and endeavours to support it by the declarations of Hertzberg to himself. But when he examines the above authorities, of which the greater part have appeared since his work, he will probably be satisfied that he must have misunderstood the Prussian minister; and he may perhaps follow the example of the excellent abbreviator Koch, who, in the last edition of his useful work, has altered that part of his narrative which ascribed the first plan of Partition to Frederic.

Poland and Turkey. These declarations Frederic communicated to the Court of Petersburg.* And they alone seem sufficient to demonstrate that no plan of partition was then contemplated by that monarch. To these communications Catharine answered in a confidential letter to the King, by a plan of peace, in which she insisted on the independence of the Crimea, the acquisition of a Greek island, and of a pretended independence for Moldavia and Walachia, which should make her the mistress of these provinces. She speaks of Austria with great distrust and alienation; but, on the other hand, intimates her readiness to enter into a closer intimacy with that Court, 'if it were possible to disengage her from her present absurd system, and to make her enter into our views, by which means Germany would be restored to its natural state; and the House of Austria would be diverted, *by other prospects*, from those views on your Majesty's possessions, which her present connexions keep up.† This correspondence continued in January and February 1771; Frederic objecting, in very friendly language, to the Russian demands, and Catharine adhering to them.‡ In January, Panin notified to the Court of Vienna, his mistress's acceptance of the good offices of Austria towards the pacification, though she declines a formal mediation. This despatch is chiefly remarkable for a declaration§, 'that the Empress had adopted, as an invariable maxim, never to desire any aggrandizement of her states.' When the Empress communicated her plan of peace to Kaunitz in May, that minister declared, that his Court could not propose conditions of peace, which must be attended with ruin to the Porte, and with great danger to the Austrian monarchy.

In the summer of the year 1770, Maria Theresa had caused her troops to take possession of the county of Zipps, a district antiently appertaining to Hungary, but which had been enjoyed by Poland for about three hundred and sixty years, under a mortgage made by Sigismond, King of Hungary, on the strange condition that, if it was not redeemed by a fixed time, it could only be so by payment of as many times the original sum as there had years elapsed since the appointed term. So unceremonious an adjudication to herself of this territory, in defiance of such an antient possession, naturally produced a remonstrance even from the timid Stanislaus, which, however, she coolly overruled. In the critical state of Poland, it was impossible that such a measure should not excite observation. An occasion soon occurred, when it seems to have contributed to produce the most important effects. Frederic, embarrassed and alarmed by the difficulties of the pacification, resolved to send his brother Henry to Petersburg, with no other instructions than to employ all his talents and address in bringing Catharine to such a temper as might preserve Prussia from a new war. Henry arrived in that capital on the 9th December 1770; and it seems now to be certain, that the first|| open proposal of a

* Goertz Mem. 100-105. Frederic to Count Solms, his Minister at Petersb. 12th Sept. and 13th Oct. 1770.

† Id. 107. 128. The French Alliance is evidently meant. 'Other prospects' point to Turkey, rather than Poland.

‡ Id. 129-146.

§ Id. 9.

|| Rulhieres, iv. 209.—Ferrand, &c. It is not after this time that any disposition compatible with the Partition appears in the confidential Letters published by Goertz.

dismemberment of Poland arose in his conversations with the Empress, and appeared to be suggested by the difficulty of making peace on such terms as would be adequate to the successes of Russia, without endangering the safety of her neighbours. It is very difficult to know who first spoke out in a conversation about such a matter between two persons of great adroitness, and who were doubtless both equally anxious to throw the blame on each other. Unscrupulous as both were, they were not so utterly shameless that each party would not use the utmost address to bring the dishonest plan out of the mouth of the other. Looks and smiles, and movements and hints, and questions and pleasantries, and broken sentences, are very intelligible preparations for a positive declaration; and the person who first used the most striking and best remembered phrase might, without any superior wickedness, incur the infamy of the first open proposition of this act of unprecedented villany. The best accounts agree, that, in speaking of the entrance of the Austrian troops into Poland, and of a report that they had occupied the fortress of Czentokow, Catharine smiling, and casting down her eyes, said to Henry—‘It seems that in Poland you ‘have only to *stoop and take*’—that Henry seized on the expression—and that Catharine then, resuming an air of indifference, turned the conversation to other subjects. ‘The Empress,’ says Frederic, ‘indignant that any other troops than her own should give law to Poland;’ said to Prince Henry, that if the Court of Vienna wished to dismember Poland, the other neighbours *had a right to do as much.*’* Henry said that there were no other means of preventing a general war. ‘*Pour prévenir ce malheur il n’y a qu’un moyen—de mettre trois têtes dans un bonnet—et cela ne peut pas se faire qu’aux dépens d’un quart.*’

Catharine, speaking of the subsidy which Frederic paid to her by treaty, said—‘I fear he will be weary of this burden, and will leave me. I wish I could secure him by *some equivalent advantage.*’—‘Nothing,’ said Henry, ‘will be more easy. You have *only to give him some territory* to which he has pretensions, and which will facilitate the communication between his dominions.’ Catharine, without appearing to understand a remark of which the meaning could not be mistaken, adroitly replied, ‘that she would willingly consent, if the balance of Europe was not disturbed, and that she wished for nothing.’† In a conversation with Baron Saldern on the terms of peace, Henry said, that a plan must be contrived which would detach Austria from Turkey, and by which the three powers should gain. ‘Very well,’ said Saldern, ‘provided that it is not at the expense of Poland;’—‘as if,’ said Henry afterwards, when he told the story, ‘there were any other country about which such plans could be formed.’

Catharine said to the Prince, ‘I will frighten Turkey and flatter England. It is your business to gain Austria, that she may lull France to sleep;’ and she became at length so eager, that when they were conversing on the subject, she dipt her finger into ink, and drew

* Mem. de 1763 jusqu’ à 1775. This account is very much confirmed by the well-informed writer who has prefixed his ‘Recollections’ to the Letters of Viomenil, who probably was General Grimouard. His account is from Prince Henry, who told it to him at Paris in 1788; who called the news of the Austrian proceedings in Poland, and Catharine’s observations on it, *a fortunate accident, which suggested the Plan of Partition.*

† Ferrand, i. 140.

with it the lines of partition on a map of Poland which lay before them. It is hard to settle the order and time of these fragments of conversation, which, in a more or less imperfect state, have found their way to the public. The probability seems to be, that Henry, who was not inferior in address, and who represented the weaker party, would avoid the first proposal, in a case where, if it were rejected, the attempt might prove fatal to the objects of his mission. However that may be, it cannot be doubted, that, before he left Petersburg on the 30th of January 1771, Catharine and he had agreed on the general outline to be proposed to his brother. On his return to Berlin, he accordingly disclosed it to the King, who received it at first with displeasure, and even with indignation, as either an extravagant chimera, or a snare held out to him by his artful and dangerous ally. His anger lasted twenty-four hours. It is natural to be desirous of believing, that a ray of conscience shot across so great a mind, and that he at least spent one honest day; — or, if he was too deeply tainted by habitual king-craft for sentiments worthy of his native superiority, it may be, at any rate, supposed that he shrunk for a moment from disgrace, and that he felt a transient, but bitter, foretaste of the lasting execration of mankind. Of whatever nature his feelings of resentment or repugnance were, it is but too certain that they were short-lived. On the next day, he embraced his brother, as inspired by some god, and declared that he was a second time the saviour of the monarchy.* He was still, however, not without apprehensions from the inconstant councils of a despotic government, influenced by so many various sorts of favourites, as that of Russia. Orlov, who still held the office of Catharine's lover, was desirous of continuing the war; Panin desired peace, but opposed the Partition, which he probably considered as the division of a Russian province. But the great body of lovers and courtiers who had been enriched by grants of forfeited estates in Poland, were favourable to a project which would secure their former booty, and, by exciting civil war, lead to new and richer forfeitures. The Czernitcheffs were supposed not to confine their hopes to confiscation, but to aspire to a principality to be formed out of the ruins of the republic. It appears that Frederic, in his correspondence with Catharine, urged, perhaps sincerely, his apprehension of general censure. Catharine answered — ‘I TAKE ALL THE BLAME UPON MYSELF.’†

The consent of the Court of Vienna, however, was still to be obtained — where the most formidable and insuperable obstacles were still to be expected in the French alliance, in resentment towards Prussia, and in the conscientious character of Maria Theresa. Prince

* Ferrand, i. 149.

† This fact was communicated by Sabatier, the French resident at Petersburg, to his Court, in a despatch of the 11th February 1774. (Ferrand, i. 152.) It transpired at that time, on occasion of an angry correspondence between the two Sovereigns, in which the King reproached the Empress with having desired the partition, and quoted the Letter in which she had offered to take on herself the whole blame. The blame due to injustice might appear a trifle to a Princess who had lived so long in a country where, if we are to believe Count Méréy Argenteau, three years the Austrian ambassador at Petersburg, ‘it was impossible to look without horror on a people who join ferocity to the vices of polished nations — who know no virtues but superstitious devotion to the will of a despot — and no talents but those of slaves — mimicry and cunning.’ — *Rulh.* ii. 160.

Henry, on the day of his return to Berlin, in a conversation with *Van Swieten*, the Austrian minister, assured him, on the part of Catharine, 'that if Austria would favour her negotiations with Turkey, she would consent to a considerable augmentation of the Austrian territory.' Van Swieten asked, 'Where?' Henry replied, 'You know as well as I do what your Court might take, and what it is in the power of Russia and Prussia to cede to her.' The cautious minister was silent; but it was impossible that he should either mistake the meaning of Henry, or fail to impart such a declaration to his Court.* As soon as the Court of Petersburg had vanquished the scruples or fears of Frederic, they required that he should sound the Court of Vienna, which he immediately did through Van Swieten.† The state of parties at Vienna was such, that Kaunitz thought it necessary to give an ambiguous answer. That celebrated coxcomb, who had grown old in the ceremonial of courts and the intrigues of cabinets, and of whom we are told that the death of his dearest friend never shortened his toilet nor retarded his dinner, still felt some regard to the treaty with France, which was his own work, and was divided between his habitual submission to the Empress Queen and the court which he paid to the young Emperor. It was a difficult task to minister to the ambition of Joseph, without alarming the conscience of Maria Theresa. That Princess, since the death of her husband, 'passed several hours of every day in a funereal apartment, adorned by crucifixes and death's heads, and by a portrait of the late Emperor, painted when he had breathed his last, and by a picture of herself, as it was supposed she would appear when the paleness and cold of death should take from her countenance the remains of that beauty which made her one of the finest women of her age.‡' Had it been possible, in any case, to rely on the influence of the conscience of a sovereign over measures of state, it might be supposed that a princess, occupied in the practice of religious austerities, and in the exercise of domestic affections, advanced in years, loving peace, beloved by her subjects, respected in other countries, professing remorse for the bloodshed which her wars had occasioned, and with her children about to ascend the greatest thrones of Europe, would not have tarnished her name by co-operating with a monarch whom she detested, and a female whom she scorned and disdained, in the most faithless and shameless measures which had ever dishonoured the Christian world. Unhappily, she was destined to be a signal example of the insecurity of such a reliance. But she could not instantly yield. Kaunitz was obliged to temporize. On the one hand, he sent Prince Lobkowitz on an embassy to Petersburg, where no minister of rank had of late represented Austria; while, on the other, he continued his negotiation for a defensive alliance with Turkey;—and duly notified, that his Court disapproved the impracticable projects of partition, and was ready to withdraw their troops from the district which they had occupied in virtue of an antient claim.§

* Ferrand, i. 149.

† Mem. de 1763 à 1775. The king does not give the dates of this communication. It probably was in April 1771.

‡ Rulh. iv. 167.

§ The want of dates in the King of Prussia's narrative is the more unfortunate, because the Count de Goertz has not published the papers relating to the negotiations between Austria and Prussia; an omission which must be owned to be somewhat suspicious.

He soon after proposed neutrality to Prussia, in the event of a war between Austria and Russia. Frederic answered, that he was bound by treaty to support Russia; but softened the harshness of that answer, by intimating that Russia might probably recede from her demand of Moldavia and Walachia. Both parts of the King's answer seemed to have produced the expected effect on Kaunitz, who now saw his country placed between a formidable war and a profitable peace. Even then, probably, if he could have hoped effectual aid from France, he might have chosen the road of honour. But the fall of the Duc de Choiseul, and the pusillanimous rather than pacific policy of his successors, destroyed all hope of French succour; and disposed Kaunitz to receive more favourably the advances of the Courts of Berlin and Petersburg. He seems to have employed the time, from June to October, in surmounting the repugnance of his Court to the new system.

The first certain evidence which we possess of a favourable disposition at Vienna towards the plan of the two powers, is in a despatch of Prince Galitzin at Vienna to Count Panin, 25th October 1771, in which he gives an account of a conversation with Kaunitz on the day before.* The manner of the Austrian minister was more gracious and cordial than formerly; and, after the usual discussions about the difficulties of the terms of peace, Galitzin at last asked him — ‘What equivalent do you propose for all that you refuse to allow us? It seems to me that there can be none. Kaunitz, suddenly assuming an air of cheerfulness, pressed my hand, and said, “Sir, since you point out the road, I will tell you; — but in such strict confidence, that it must be kept a profound secret at your Court; for if it were to transpire and be known even to the ally and friend of Russia, my Court *would solemnly retract and disavow this communication*. Their Imperial Majesties, convinced of your good disposition to cement the friendship between the two Courts, have expressly charged me to confer confidentially with you on the present state of affairs.” He then proposed a moderate plan of peace — but added, that the Court of Vienna could not use its good offices to cause it to be adopted, *unless the Court of Petersburg would give the most positive assurances that she would not subject Poland to dismemberment for her own advantage, or for that of any other*; — provided always, that their Imperial Majesties were to retain the county of Zipps, but to evacuate every other part of the Polish territory which the Austrian troops may have occupied. I observed, that the occupation of Zipps had much the air of a dismemberment. This he denied; but said, that his Court would co-operate with Russia in forcing the Poles to put an end to their dissensions. I observed, that the plan of pacification showed the perfect disinterestedness of her Imperial Majesty towards Poland, *and that no idea of dismemberment had ever entered into her mind, or into that of her ministers*. “I am happy,” said Kaunitz, “to hear you say so;” and then went into commonplaces on the difficulties and dangers of dismemberment. The whole conference passed in a quite different tone and manner from those of our preceding interviews.’ On the 30th of October, Galitzin writes that Kaunitz, in his new style of kindness, had assured him, ‘that the intercourse should be concealed from Versailles, and communicated only to Berlin.’

Panin, in his answer †, 16th December 1771, to Galitzin, seems to

* Goertz, 75.

† Ib. 153.

to have perfectly well understood the extraordinary artifice of the Austrian minister, who, by a formal declaration for the integrity of Poland, intended to draw from Russia an open proposal of dismemberment. 'The Court of Vienna,' says he, 'claims the thirteen towns, and disclaims dismemberment. BUT THERE IS NO STATE WHICH DOES NOT KEEP CLAIMS OPEN AGAINST ITS NEIGHBOURS, AND THE RIGHT TO ENFORCE THEM WHEN THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY! and there is none which does not feel the necessity of the balance of power to secure the possession of each. To be sincere, we must not conceal that Russia is also in a condition to produce well-grounded claims against Poland, and that we can with confidence say the same of our ally the King of Prussia; and if the Court of Vienna finds it expedient to enter into measures with us and our ally to compare and arrange our claims, we are ready to agree.' Galitzin, on the 29th January 1772, answered *, in which he acknowledges the receipt of the former despatch, containing 'an invitation to this Court to accede to a treaty for the Partition of Poland.' Kaunitz said, that it might be 'necessary not to confine the partition to Poland, but that, if that country did not afford means for an equal partition between the two Courts, territory might be taken from some other which might be forced to give it up.' He concluded, that it was 'necessary to keep the negotiation a profound secret from *France and England, who might make a joint effort to prevent the dismemberment.*' So rapid a progress had Austria made in her new system, that we find it proposing a new Partition, which could only relate to Turkey, with which she had concluded an alliance six months before, and whose territories she had solemnly bound herself to reconquer from the Russians! The fears of Kaunitz for the union of France and England were unhappily needless. These great powers, alike deserters of the rights of nations, and betrayers of the liberties of Europe, saw the crime consummated without stretching forth an arm to prevent it.

In the midst of this conspiracy between Kaunitz and Galitzin, a magnificent embassy was sent from France to her ally, which arrived at Vienna early in January 1772.† At the head of this mission was the Prince Louis de Rohan, long after unfortunately conspicuous, then appointed as a diplomatic pageant to grace the embassy by his high birth; while the business continued to be in the hands of M. Durand, a diplomatist of experience and ability, who had the character of envoy. Contrary, however, to all reasonable expectation, the young prince discovered the secret which had escaped the sagacity of the veteran minister. Durand, completely duped by Kaunitz, warned Rohan to hint no suspicions of Austria in his despatches to Versailles. About the end of February, Rohan received information of the treachery of the Austrian court so secretly‡, that he was almost

* Goertz, 175.

† Memoires de Georgel, i. 219.

‡ The Abbé Georgel ascribes the detection to his master the ambassador; but it is more probably ascribed by M. Schoell, (*Hist. de Traités*, xiv. 76.) to a young native of Strasburgh, named Barth, the second secretary of the French Legation, who, by his knowledge of German, and intimacy with persons in inferior office, detected the project of Partition, but required the ambassador to conceal it even from *Georgel*, the senior secretary. Schoell quotes a passage of a letter from B. to a friend at Strasburg, which puts his early knowledge of it beyond dispute.

obliged to represent it as a discovery made by his own penetration. He complained to Kaunitz, that no assistance was given to the Polish confederates, who, under the command of French confederates, had at that moment brilliantly distinguished themselves by the capture of the Castle of Cracow. Kaunitz assured him, that ‘the Empress Queen never would suffer the balance of power to be disturbed by a dismemberment which would give too much preponderance to neighbouring and rival Courts.’ The ambassador suspected the intentions that lurked beneath this equivocal and perfidious answer, and communicated them to his Court. On the 2d of March, he gave an account of the conference; but the Duc d’Aiguillon, either deceived, or willing to appear so, rebuked Prince Louis for his officiousness, observing, that ‘the ambassador’s conjectures being incompatible with the positive assurances of the Court of Vienna, constantly repeated by Count Mercy, the ambassador at Paris, and with the promises recently made to M. Durand, the thread which could only deceive must be quitted.’ Some time afterwards, when the preparations for the seizure of the Polish provinces became too conspicuous, the ambassador had a private audience of the Empress Queen on the subject. That Princess *shed tears at the fate of the oppressed Poles*; but her words were as ambiguous and jesuitical as those of her minister. ‘She entreated the King of France to rely on the negotiations of his *faithful ally!* for bringing matters to such an issue as should give peace to Poland, without causing convulsions in Europe.’ The Prince gave an account of this audience in a private letter to M. d’Aiguillon, to be shown only to the King, which contained the following passage.

‘I have indeed seen Maria Theresa *weep over the misfortunes of oppressed Poland*; but that Princess, practised in the art of concealing her designs, has tears at command. *With one hand she lifts her handkerchief to her eyes to wipe away her tears; with the other she wields the sword for the Partition of Poland.*’* It may be mentioned, incidentally, that the letter produced some remarkable effects. Madame Du Barry got possession of it, and read the above passage aloud at one of her supper parties. An enemy of Rohan, who was present, immediately told the Dauphiness of this attack on her mother. That young Princess was highly and naturally incensed at such language, especially as she had been given to understand that the letter was written to Madame Du Barry. She became the irreconcilable enemy of the Prince, afterwards Cardinal de Rohan, who, in hopes of conquering her hostility, engaged in the strange adventure of the diamond necklace, one of the secondary agents in promoting the French Revolution, and not the least considerable source of the popular prejudices against the

* Van Swieten says, that the King of Prussia showed him the plan of Partition agreed to at Petersburg between the Empress and Prince Henry, 20th February 1772. In a subsequent letter, he says, ‘The Partition is not to be doubted. This injustice is loudly blamed here by every body. The English ambassador is enraged that the project should have been conducted with such address, that neither he nor the ministers of his court at St. Petersburg or Berlin suspected it; and that Lord Cathcart was even the dupe of Count Panin, who held a quite opposite language to him,’ 1st May 1772. The French diplomatist, in spite of the treachery towards his own nation, seems to feel some exultation that the English ministers were *taken in*.

* Georgel, i. 264.

Queen, which produced such injustice and barbarity towards that unfortunate Princess.

In February and March 1772, the three powers exchanged declarations, binding themselves to adhere to the principle of equality in the Partition. In August following, the treaties of dismemberment were executed at Petersburg; and in September the demands and determinations of the Combined Courts were made known at Warsaw. Their declarations are well known; and it is needless to characterize papers which have been universally regarded at the utmost extremity of human injustice and effrontery. An undisputed possession of centuries; a succession of treaties to which all the European States were either parties or guarantees; nay, the recent, solemn, and repeated declarations and engagements of the three governments themselves, were considered as forming no title to dominion. In answer to all these titles to sovereignty, the Empress Queen and the King of Prussia appealed to some pretensions of their predecessors in the thirteenth century. The Empress of Russia alleged only the evils suffered by neighbouring states from the anarchy of Poland.* The remonstrances of the Polish government, and their appeals to all those states who were bound to protect them as guarantees of the treaty of Oliva, and as deeply interested in maintaining the sacredness of antient possession, were equally vain. When the Austrian ambassador announced the Partition at Versailles, the old King said, if ‘the *other* man (Choiseul) had been ‘here, this would not have *happened* ;’ an observation which had probably some foundation in truth, and which certainly conveys the highest commendation ever bestowed on that powerful minister. It has been said that Austria did not accede to the Partition till France had *refused* to co-operate against it†; but this statement is contradicted by the authentic correspondence published by Goertz, as well as by Georgel. The utmost that can be supposed to be true is, that a conviction of the feebleness of the French government, and of the indisposition of the French ministers to incur the necessary hazards, was among the principal motives of the base and fatal resolution of the Austrian Court. It has, on the other hand, been stated, that the Duc d’Aiguillon proposed to Lord Rochfort, that an English or French fleet should be sent to the Baltic to prevent the dismemberment.‡ But such an application, if it occurred at all, must have related to transactions long antecedent to the Partition and to the administration of D’Aiguillon, for Lord Rochfort was recalled from the French embassy in 1768, to be made Secretary of State, on the resignation of Lord Shelburne. Neither can the application have been to Lord Rochfort as Secretary of State; for France was not in his department. In truth,

* Marten’s *Recu. de Traités*, i. 461, &c.

† Of this M. de Segur tells us, that he was assured by Kaunitz, Cobentzel, and Vergennes. The only circumstance which approaches to a resemblance of his statement is, that there are traces in Ferrand of secret intimations conveyed by D’Aiguillon to Frederic, that there was no likelihood of France proceeding to extremities in favour of Poland. This clandestine treachery is, however, very different from a public refusal.

‡ Coxe’s *Hist. House of Austria*, ii. 516., where the authority of the Rochfort despatches is quoted. It is to be regretted that Mr. Coxe should, in the same place, have quoted a writer so discredited as the Abbé Soulavie (*Mem. de Louis XVI.*), from whom he quotes a memorial, without doubt altogether imaginary, of D’Aiguillon to Louis XV.

both France and Great Britain had, at that time, lost all influence in the affairs of Europe;—France, from the imbecility of her government, and partly, in the case of Poland, from reliance on the Court of Vienna; Great Britain, from being left without an ally, in consequence of her own treachery to Prussia, but in a still greater degree from the unpopularity of her government at home, and the approaches of a revolt in the noblest part of her Colonies, which was destined to atone for the triumph of tyranny in Europe, by the establishment of liberty in America. Had there been a spark of spirit, or a ray of wise policy, in the counsels of England and France, they would have been immediately followed by all the secondary powers whose very existence depended on the general reverence for justice. It must be owned also, to their shame, that ample time was afforded for their interposition, even after the conspiracy of the Three Powers was made known to all the world. The completion of the dismemberment was retarded both by the usual quarrels among banditti about the distribution of booty, and by the stand made by the Poles after they were abandoned by all Europe. The disputes of the Three Powers about the division of the plunder were protracted for more than two years. Catharine refused to allow Frederic to take possession of Dantzick. The turbulent spirit of Joseph II. suggested a still more extensive partition*; and, in the midst of professions of inviolable friendship, they were more than once on the brink of open enmity. Panin at one time said to the French resident, ‘You know we are not *yet* in a state to break with our allies.’† The great advantage promised by our proverb to honest men from the quarrels of their enemies might still have been reaped, if there had been one government in Europe capable of vigorously performing its duty to civilized society.

The Poles made a gallant stand. The Government were compelled to call a Diet, and, though the Three Powers insisted on the necessity of unanimity in the most trivial act, they obliged this Diet to form itself under the tie of a confederation, which gave the most inconsiderable majority the power of sacrificing their country. In spite, however, of every species of corruption and violence, the Diet, surrounded as it was by foreign bayonets, gave powers to deputies to negotiate with the Three Powers relating to their pretensions, by a majority of only one. And it was not till September 1773, that the Republic was compelled to cede, by a pretended treaty, some of her finest provinces, with nearly five millions of her population. The conspirators, not satisfied with this act of robbery, were resolved to deprive the remains of the Polish nation of all hope of establishing a vigorous government, or attaining domestic tranquillity. The *Liberum Veto*, the elective monarchy, and all the other institutions which tended to perpetuate disorder, were again imposed on the nation by a pretended guarantee. But the ancient Constitution made the acts of a confederative Diet binding only till the next free Diet. These acts of violence and rapine could not receive a legal form till the meeting of that Assembly in 1776.‡ During the whole of that time Poland was occupied by Russian troops; and the kind language of Catharine to

* Ferrand, ii. 271.

† Ibid. 273. Lettre de Sabatier, 26 Août 1774.

‡ Ferrand, L. vii.

Stanislaus was, 'It depends only on *mé* whether the name of Poland is to be struck out of the map of Europe.'

Maria Theresa had the merit of confessing her fault. On the 19th of February 1775, when M. de Breteuil, the ambassador of Louis XVI., had his first audience, after some embarrassed remarks on the subject of Poland, she at length exclaimed, in a tone of sorrow, 'I know, Sir, that I have brought a deep stain on my reign, by what has been done in Poland; but I am sure that I should be forgiven if it could be known what repugnance I had to it, and how many circumstances combined against my principles.* Her regret may have been sincere; but such professions were due in decency to such an ally as France, which had been so deceived and betrayed; and her plea would not have obtained an acquittal for a common offender guilty of a far less atrocious crime, at the bar of a court of justice. If she felt remorse, it was not shared by her son, who, at the period of the Bavarian war in 1778, and at the death of his mother in 1780, proposed to Frederic II. the Partition of Germany†, which, though supported on both occasions by Prince Henry, was firmly rejected by the King, who, in the latter years of his life, made war only for the security of his neighbours, and laboured during peace to improve the condition of his subjects.

The guilt of the three parties to the Partition was very unequal. Frederic, the weakest, had most to apprehend, both from a rupture with his ally, and from the accidents of general war; while, on the other hand, some enlargement seemed requisite to the defence of his dominions. The House of Austria entered late and reluctantly into the conspiracy, which she probably might have escaped if France had been under a more vigorous government. Catharine was the great criminal. She had for eight years oppressed, betrayed, and ravaged Poland — imposed a King on that country — prevented all reformation of the government — fomented divisions among the nobility — and, in one word, created and maintained that anarchy, which she at length used as a pretence for dismemberment. Her vast empire needed no accession of territory for defence, or, it might have been hoped, even for ambition. Yet, by her insatiable avidity for new conquest from Turkey, she produced the pretended necessity for the Partition. In order to prevent her from acquiring the Crimea, Moldavia, and Walachia, the Courts of Vienna and Berlin agreed to allow her to commit an equivalent robbery on Poland, on condition that each of them should rob the same country to the same amount, — thus preserving the balance of power by an agreement that their booty should be equal, and preventing Russia from disproportionate aggrandizement, by seizing on the provinces of a State, with which they were all three at peace and in amity, and whose territories they were bound by treaties, and pledged by recent declarations, to maintain inviolate. Monstrous as this transaction was, it is evident that, whoever first proposed it, Catharine was the real cause and author of the whole. This blame, which she was daring enough to take on herself, will blacken her memory in the eyes of the latest posterity; and, should any historian, dazzled by the splendour of her reign, or more excusably seduced by her genius — her love of letters — her efforts in legislation — and her

* Flassan. Hist. de la Diplomatie Française, vii. 125.

† Vie du Prince Henri de Prusse, 188-216.

real services to her subjects, labour to palliate this great offence, he will only share her infamy in the vain attempt to extenuate her guilt.

It must be owned, that the unfortunate structure of society in Poland, and the vicious constitution of its government, rendered it more easy for its unprincipled neighbours to dismember its territories. The danger of an elective monarchy, and especially of foreign candidates, was great. The law, which required unanimity, and sanctioned armed combinations of individuals, was at variance with all the principles of good government. But many states, with institutions equally objectionable, have continued for ages safe and powerful. Villanage has been considered as one of the causes of the downfall of Poland; and it has sometimes been perfidiously used to lessen our indignation against the Partition. Unquestionably, every country is weakened by so detestable an institution as personal slavery, which renders it impossible to arm the greatest part of the inhabitants in the public defence. But it should be considered in this case, that the peasants of the neighbouring nations were serfs as much as those of Poland; and that she never was at war with any country but Sweden where the body of the labourers were free. The Polish serfs never revolted against their lords, nor joined the enemies of (what could hardly be called) their country. Their condition was only a deduction from the military strength of the state, and cannot be regarded as more than as negatively contributing to its ruin, and rendering its re-establishment more hopeless. The intolerant laws against the Dissidents were an immediate agent in the destruction of the Republic. Among the other evils of such laws, it is none of the least that they create a body of disaffected citizens, and in times of danger tend to drive them into the arms of an enemy. The cause of the Dissidents was the fatal pretext for the interference of Russia; it gave her policy a specious colour of liberality; and, for a time, rendered the Poles unpopular throughout Europe, for their resistance to the tolerant principles of the age. It is very remarkable, that the laws against the Dissidents began not long after the commencement of the laws against the Catholics in Ireland, at the moment when all other enlightened nations were beginning to adopt the principle of religious liberty. There are, indeed, several other resemblances in the character and fate of these two unfortunate nations, who were both torn in pieces by religious bigotry,—who both possessed an ingenious, accomplished, and gallant gentry,—who gave a refined exterior to the community; while, in both, the body of the people, amidst all the bounty of nature, presented a general scene of disorder and beggary;—with this extraordinary difference, however, that the policy of Great Britain in Ireland discovered the art of lowering the Irish peasants, though enjoying the legal rights of freemen, to as abject a state of ignorance, vice, and wretchedness, as the boors of Poland, who had no pretence to any privilege, but were bound to the soil, and abandoned by the law to the pleasure of their masters.

The defects of the Polish Government probably contributed to the loss of independence most directly by their influence on the military system. The body of the gentry retained the power of the sword, as well as the authority of the state in their own hands. They were too jealous of the Crown to strengthen the regular army, though even that body was more in the power of the great officers named by the Diet, than in that of the King. They continued to serve on horseback as in ancient times, and to regard the *Pospolite*, or general armanent of the

gentry, as the impenetrable bulwark of the Commonwealth. Unless, indeed, they had armed their slaves, it would have been impossible to have established a formidable native infantry. Their armed force was adequate to the short irruptions or sudden enterprises of antient war; and their mode of war was sufficient for their security and even greatness, while their enemies pursued a system nearly similar. But a body of noble cavalry was altogether incapable of the subordination and discipline, which are the essence of modern armies; and the military system was irreconcilable with the acquisition of the science of war. They were unfitted for long hostilities, and for comprehensive plans of operation; they remained ignorant of the arts of attack and defence; they disdained fortifications; and, in fine, adopted none of those military improvements which have rendered civilized war an arduous and extensive science. It was impossible for them, therefore, to encounter the armies of neighbouring states. In war alone, the Polish nobility were barbarians. War was the only part of civilization which the Russians had obtained.* In one country, the sovereign nobility of half a million durst neither arm their slaves, nor trust a mercenary army. In the other, the Czar, who ruled on the principles of Eastern despotism, naturally employed a standing army, which he, without fear, recruited among the enslaved peasantry. To them, military conscription was a reward, and the station of a private soldier a preferment. They were fitted by their previous condition to be rendered, by military discipline, the most patient and obedient of soldiers, without enterprise, but without fear; equally inaccessible to discontent and attachment, passive and almost insensible members of the great military machine. The despotism of Russia, in short, easily adopted military improvements. The aristocracy of Poland stubbornly rejected them. Why these different forms prevailed in the two countries is a more difficult question. There are many circumstances in the institutions and destiny of a people, which seem to arise from original peculiarities of national character, of which it is often impossible to explain the origin, or even to show the nature. Denmark and Sweden are countries situated in the same region of the globe, and inhabited by nations of the same descent, language, and religion; very similar in their manners, in their antient institutions, and modern civilization. He would be a bold speculator who should attempt to account for the talent, fame, turbulence, and revolutions of Sweden, and for the quiet prosperity and obscure mediocrity which have formed the character of Denmark.

There is no political doctrine more false or more pernicious than that which represents vices in internal government as an extenuation of unjust aggression against a country, and a consolation to mankind for the destruction of its independence. As no government is without great faults, such a doctrine multiplies the grounds of war, gives an unbounded scope to ambition, and furnishes benevolent pretexts for every sort of rapine. However bad the government of Poland may have been, its bad qualities do not in the least degree abate the evil

* The great judge of military merit did not estimate very highly the proficiency of the Russians. ‘ Les généraux de Catharine, ignoraient la castrometrie et la tactique. Ceux du Sultan, avaient encore moins de connoissances de sorte que pour se faire une juste idée de cette guerre; il faut se représenter des borgnes qui, après avoir bien battu les aveugles, gagnent sur eux un ascendant complet.’ —*Frederic II. Mém. de 1763 à 1775.*

consequence of the Partition, in weakening, by its example, the security of all other nations. An act of robbery on the hoards of a worthless miser, though they be bestowed on the needy and the deserving, does not the less shake the common basis of property. The greater number of nations live under governments which are indisputably bad; but it is a less evil that they should continue in that state, than that they should be gathered under a single conqueror, even with a chance of improvement in their internal administration. Conquest and extensive empire are among the greatest evils, and the division of mankind into independent communities is among the greatest advantages, which fall to the lot of men. The multiplication of such communities increases the reciprocal control of opinion; strengthens the principles of generous rivalry; makes every man love his own antient and separate country with a warmer affection; brings nearer to all mankind the objects of noble ambition; and adds to the incentives to which we owe works of genius and acts of virtue. There are some peculiarities in the condition of every civilized country which are peculiarly favourable to some talents or good qualities. To destroy the independence of a people is to annihilate a great assemblage of intellectual and moral qualities, which no human skill could bring together, which forms the character of a nation, and distinguishes it from other communities. As long as national spirit exists, there is always reason to hope that it will work real reformation. When national spirit is destroyed, though better forms may be imposed by a conqueror, there is no farther hope of those only valuable reforms which represent the sentiments, and issue from the heart of a people. The barons at Runnymede continued to be the masters of slaves; but the noble principles of the charter shortly began to release these slaves from bondage. Those who conquered at Marathon and Plataea were the masters of slaves; yet, by the defeat of Eastern tyrants, they preserved knowledge, liberty, civilization itself, and contributed to that progress of the human mind which will one day banish slavery from the world. It is impossible to estimate the loss which the whole human race may suffer by the destruction of the moral being called a nation, with all the characteristic faculties and qualities which belong to it, and all the susceptibilities of improvement which may be interwoven with the structure of its character. How many germs of excellence may thus be crushed! How many powers extinguished which were to be unfolded in a more advanced period of national progress! Each people have peculiarities, and some of these peculiarities may be virtues, for the loss of which no other people can make adequate amends to the general society of mankind. Among nations, as among individuals, an unpromising youth is sometimes succeeded by a respectable manhood. Had the people of Scotland been conquered by Edward II. or by Henry VIII., a common observer would have seen nothing in the event but that a race of turbulent barbarians was reduced to subjection by a more civilized state. It is only now we know that such an event would have destroyed the seeds of the genius and virtue which they have since displayed, and which the conscious dignity of national independence contributed to unfold.

After the first Partition of Poland was completed in 1776, that devoted country was suffered for sixteen years to enjoy an interval of more undisturbed tranquillity than it had known for a century. Russian

armies ceased to vex it. The dispositions of other foreign powers became more favourable. Frederic II. now entered on that spotless and honourable portion of his reign, in which he made a just war for the defence of the integrity of Bavaria, and of the independence of Germany. It has been already stated, that, on that occasion, he preferred a war in which he could win nothing, to a share in the Partition of Germany, with which he was tempted by Joseph II. Attempts were not wanting to seduce him into new enterprises against Poland. When, in the year 1782, reports were current that Potemkin was to be made King of Poland, that haughty and profligate barbarian told Count Goertz, the Prussian ambassador at Petersburg, that he despised the Polish nation too much to be ambitious of reigning over them.* He desired the ambassador to communicate to his master a plan for a new Partition, observing, ‘that the first was only *child’s play*, and that if they *had taken all, the outcry would not have been greater* ;’ sentiments and language perfectly worthy of the leader of a gang of banditti. Goertz unwillingly communicated this proposal to his master. Every man who feels for the dignity of human nature will rejoice that the illustrious monarch firmly rejected the proposal. Potemkin read over his refusal three times before he could believe his eyes ; and at length exclaimed, in language very common among certain politicians, ‘I never could have believed that King Frederic was capable of *romantic ideas*.’† As soon as Frederic returned to counsels worthy of himself, he became unfit for the purposes of the Empress, who, in 1780, refused to renew her alliance with him, and found a more suitable instrument of her designs in the restless character and shallow understanding of Joseph II., whose unprincipled ambition was now released from the restraint which his mother’s scruples had imposed on it. The project of re-establishing an Eastern empire now occupied the Court of Petersburg, and a portion of the spoils of Turkey was a sufficient lure to Joseph. The state of Europe tended daily more and more to restore some degree of independence to the remains of Poland. Though France, her most antient and constant ally, was then absorbed by the approaches of those tremendous mutations which have for more than thirty years agitated Europe, other powers now adopted a policy, of which the influence was favourable to the Poles. Prussia, as she receded from Russia, became gradually connected with England, Holland, and Sweden : and her honest policy in the care of Bavaria, placed her at the head of all the independent members of the Germanic Confederacy. Turkey declared war against Russia ; and the Austrian Government was disturbed by the discontent and revolts which the precipitate innovations of Joseph had excited in various provinces of the monarchy. A formidable combination against the power of Russia was in process of time formed. Circumstances became not long after so favourable to the Poles, that, in the treaty between Prussia and the Porte, concluded at Constantinople in January 1790, the contracting

* Dohm Denkwürdig keit, II. xlv. Communicated by the Count de Goertz to Dohm.

† It was about this time that Goertz gave an account of the Court of Russia to the Prince Royal of Prussia, who was about to visit Petersburg, of which the following passage is a curious specimen. ‘Le Prince Bariatinski est reconnu *scélérat*, et même comme tel employé encore de tems en tems.’—Dohm, II. xxxii.

parties bound themselves to endeavour to obtain from Austria the restitution of those Polish provinces, to which she had given the name of Galicia.*

During the progress of these auspicious changes, the Polish nation began to entertain the hope that they might at length be suffered to reform their institutions, to provide for their own quiet and safety, and to adopt that policy which might one day enable them to resume their antient station among European nations. From 1778 to 1788, no great measures had been adopted; but no tumults disturbed the country: reasonable opinions made some progress, and a national spirit was slowly reviving. The nobility patiently listened to plans for the establishment of a productive revenue and a regular army; a disposition to renounce their dangerous right of electing a king made perceptible advances; and the fatal law of unanimity had been so branded as an instrument of Russian policy, that in the Diets of these ten years, no nuncio was found bold enough to employ his negative. At the breaking out of the Turkish war, the Poles ventured to refuse not only an alliance offered by Catharine, but even permission to her to raise a body of thirty thousand noble cavalry in the territories of the republic.†

In the midst of these excellent symptoms of public sense and temper, a Diet assembled at Warsaw in October 1788, from whom the restoration of the republic was hoped, and by whom it would have been accomplished, if their prudent and honest measures had not been defeated by one of the blackest acts of treachery recorded in the annals of mankind. Perhaps the four years which followed present a more signal example than any other part of history,—of patience, moderation, wisdom, and integrity in a popular assembly,—of spirit and unanimity among a turbulent people,—of inveterate malignity in an old oppressor,—and of the most execrable perfidy in a pretended friend. The Diet applied themselves with the utmost diligence and caution to reform the State. They watched the progress of popular opinion, and proposed no reformation till the public seemed ripe for its reception. When the spirit of the French Revolution was everywhere prevalent, these reformers had the courageous prudence to avoid whatever was visionary in its principles, or violent in their execution. They refused the powerful but perilous aid of the enthusiasm which it excited long before excesses and atrocities had rendered it odious. They were content to be reproached by their friends for the slowness of their reformatory measures; and to be despised for their limited extent by many of those generous minds who then aspired to bestow a new and more perfect liberty on mankind. After having taken measures for the re-establishment of the finances and the army, they employed the greater part of the year 1789 in the discussion of constitutional reforms, which, besides their own evident necessity, the Diet was called on to adopt by the King of Prussia, who offered, in December 1789, to enter into an alliance with the republic, on condition of an increase of the army to 60,000 men, and *of the establishment of a new constitution.*‡

* Schoell Trait. xiv. 473.

† Ferrand, ii. 336.

‡ Schoell, xiv. 117. On the 12th October 1788, the King of Prussia had offered by Buckholz, his minister at Warsaw, to guarantee the integrity of the Polish territory. Ferr. ii. 452. On the 19th November 1788, he advises them not to be diverted, by any pretended guarantee, from '*ameliorating their form of government*'; and declares, that he will guarantee their independence without

A committee for the reform of the Constitution had been appointed in September 1789, who, before the conclusion of that year, made a report which contained an outline of the most necessary alterations in the government. No immediate decision was made on these propositions; but the sense of the Diet was, in the course of repeated discussions, more decisively manifested. In the year 1790, it was resolved, without a division, that the Elector of Saxony should be named successor to the Crown. This determination, which was the prelude to the establishment of hereditary monarchy, was confirmed by the Dietines, or Electoral Assemblies. The elective franchise, formerly exercised by all the nobility, was limited to landed proprietors; and many other fundamental principles of a new constitution were perfectly understood to be generally approved, though they were not formally established. In the mean time, as the Polish Diets were biennial, the assembly approached to the close of its legal duration. It was dangerous to intrust the work of reformation to an entirely new assembly; it seemed also dangerous to establish the precedent of Diets prolonging their own existence beyond the legal period. An expedient was adopted, not indeed sanctioned by law, but founded in constitutional principles, and of which the success afforded a signal proof of the unanimity of the Polish nations. New writs were issued to all the Dietines, requiring them to chuse the same number of Nuncios as usual. These elections proceeded regularly; and the new members being received by the old, formed with them a double Diet. Almost all the Dietines instructed their new representatives to vote for hereditary monarchy, and declared their approbation of the past conduct of the Diet.

On the 16th December 1790, the double Diet assembled with a more direct, deliberate, formal, and complete authority, from the great majority of the freemen, to reform the abuses of the government, than perhaps any other representative assembly in Europe ever possessed. They declared the pretended guarantee of Russia in 1776 to be ‘*null, an invasion of national independence, incompatible with the natural rights of every civilized society, and with the political privileges of every free nation.*’* The Diet now felt the necessity of incorporating, in one law, all the reforms which had passed, and all those which had received the unequivocal sanction of public approbation. The state of foreign affairs, as well as the general voice at home, loudly called for the immediate adoption of such a measure. It was accordingly determined to lay before the Diet, on the 5th May 1791, a law, entitled the Constitution of Poland. The apprehension of violence from the Russian faction, now provoked by the smallness of their number among their own countrymen, and unfortunately encouraged by the condition of their wicked accomplices abroad, determined the patriotic party to anticipate the execution of their plan; and the

* *mixing in their internal affairs, or restraining the liberty of their discussions, which, on the contrary, he will guarantee.* Ferr. ii. 457. The negotiations of Prince Czartorinski at Berlin, and the other notes of Buckholz, seconded by Mr. Hailes the English minister, agree entirely in language and principles with the passages which have been cited.

* Ferrand, iii. 55. The absence of dates in this writer obliges us to fix the time of this decree by conjecture.

new Constitution was presented to the Diet on the 3d of May*, after having been read and received the night before with unanimous and enthusiastic applause by far the greater part of the members of both Houses, at the palace of Prince Radzivil, Only twelve dissentient voices opposed it in the Diet; so small was the number of those enemies of their country, whom the whole power and wealth of Muscovy could command. Never were debates and votes more free. These men, the most hateful of apostates, were neither attacked, nor threatened, nor insulted. The people of Poland, on this great and sacred occasion, seemed to have lost all the levity and turbulence of their character, and to have already learnt those virtues which are usually the slow fruit of that liberty which they were then only about to plant.

The constitution confirmed the rights of the Established Church, together with religious liberty, as dictated by the charity which religion inculcates and inspires. It established an hereditary monarchy in the Electoral House of Saxony; reserving to the nation the right of choosing a new race of Kings, in case of the extinction of that family. The executive power was vested in the King, whose ministers were responsible for its exercise. The Legislature was divided into two Houses, the Senate, and the House of Nuncios, with respect to whom, the ancient constitutional language and forms were preserved. The necessity of unanimity was taken away, and, with it, those dangerous remedies of Confederation and Confederate Diets which it had rendered necessary. Each considerable town received new rights, with a restoration of all their antient privileges. The burgesses recovered the right of electing their own magistrates.† All their property within their towns was declared to be inheritable and inviolable. They were empowered to acquire land in Poland, as they always had in Lithuania. All the offices of the State, the law, the church, and the army, were thrown open to them. The larger towns were empowered to send deputies to the Diet, with a right to vote on all local and commercial subjects, and to speak on all questions whatsoever. All these deputies became Noble, as did every officer of the rank of captain, and every lawyer who filled the humblest office of magistracy, and every burgess who acquired a property in land paying 5*l.* of yearly taxes. Two hundred burgesses were ennobled at the moment, and a provision was made for ennobling thirty at every future Diet. Industry was perfectly unfettered. Every man might freely exercise any trade.

The antient privilege of the Polish nobility, that they should not be arrested till after conviction ‡, was extended to the burgesses; a most inconvenient privilege, but of which the extension was peculiarly well adapted to raise the traders to a level with the gentry. The same object was promoted by a provision, that no nobleman, by becoming a

* The particular events of the 3d of May are related fully by Ferrand, and shortly in the Annual Register of 1791; a valuable narrative, though not without considerable mistakes.

† ‘ A free choice of all magistrates and officers of towns, by their own citizens, *being the essence of liberty*, it is declared hereby to be inherently their right.’—*Law on Towns*, Sect. i. Par. 12.

‡ *Neminem captivabimus nisi jure victum*, was the privilege of Polish citizens, or noble Poles, which were synonymous expressions. It amounted to an impunity for the greatest crimes.

merchant, a shopkeeper, or artisan, should forfeit his privileges, or be deemed to derogate from his rank. Numerous paths to nobility were thus thrown open. Every art was employed to make the ascent easy. Even the abusive privileges of the higher class were bestowed on the lower. A temptation was held out to the indigent nobility, to remove prejudice against industrious occupations, by embracing them; the burgesses would very shortly be ennobled in considerable numbers; while, on the other hand, the substantial rights of nobility were taken away from a great part of the nobles, by the limitation of the elective franchise to the landholders. No better expedient for blending the two orders could be imagined. The only mode of raising the lower class was to bestow on them a share in the honour and estimation immemorially enjoyed by the higher. Such institutions must have gradually blended these hitherto discordant orders into one mass. The barriers which separated the different classes of society would have been broken down. The wisdom and liberality of the Polish gentry, if they had not been defeated by atrocious and flagitious enemies, would, by a single act of legislation, have accomplished that fusion of the various orders of society, which it required the most propitious circumstances, in a long course of ages, to effect, in the freest and most happy of the European nations.

Having thus communicated political privileges to hitherto disregarded freemen, the Diet of Poland did not neglect to pave the way for the final communication of personal liberty to slaves. The constitution extended to all serfs the full protection of law, which before was enjoyed by those of the Royal demesnes; and it facilitated and encouraged voluntary manumission, by ratifying all contracts relating to it—the first step in every country towards the accomplishment of the abolition of slavery—the highest of all the objects of human legislation, but perhaps also that to which the road is steepest and most rough.

The effect of this glorious revolution was not dishonoured by popular tumult, by sanguinary excesses, by political executions. So far did the excellent Diet carry their wise regard to the sacredness of property, that though they were in urgent need of financial resources, they postponed, till after the death of present incumbents, the application to the relief of the State of the income of those ecclesiastical offices which were no longer deemed necessary for the purposes of religion. History will one day do justice to that illustrious body, and hold out to posterity, as the perfect model of a most arduous reformation, that revolution, which fell to the ground from no want of wisdom on their part, but from the irresistible power and detestable wickedness of their enemies.

As the storm which demolished this noble edifice came from abroad, it is now necessary to turn our attention to the connexion of Poland with foreign States. On the 29th of March 1790, a treaty of alliance was concluded at Warsaw between the King of Prussia and the Republic of Poland, containing a reciprocal guarantee of territory, and specifying the succours which each party was to afford to the other in case of attack; but peculiarly distinguished by one stipulation, which it is necessary to insert in this place. *‘If any foreign Power, in virtue of any preceding acts and stipulations whatsoever, should claim the right of interfering in the internal affairs of the republic of Poland, at*

‘ what time, or in what manner soever, his Majesty the King of Prussia will first employ his good offices to prevent hostilities in consequence of such pretension; *but, if his good offices should be ineffectual, and that hostilities against Poland should ensue, his Majesty the King of Prussia, considering such an event as a case provided for in this treaty, will assist the republic according to the tenor of the 4th article of the present treaty.*’ * The aid here referred to was, on the part of Prussia, 22,000 or 30,000 men; or, in case of necessity, all its disposable force. The undisputed purpose of the article was to guard Poland against an interference in her affairs by Russia, under pretence of the guarantee of the Polish constitution in 1775. No other danger of this nature existed. For this exclusive object was the stipulation framed.

It is true, that the King of Prussia, after the conclusion of the treaty, urgently pressed the Diet for the cession of the cities of Dantzick and Thorn. But that claim was afterwards withdrawn and disavowed. On the 13th of May 1791, Goltz, then Prussian Chargé d’Affaires at Warsaw, in a conference with the Deputation of the Diet for Foreign Affairs, said, ‘ that he had received orders from his Prussian Majesty to express to them his satisfaction at *the happy revolution which had at length given to Poland a wise and regular constitution.*’ † On the 23d of May, in his answer to the letter of Stanislaus, announcing the adoption of the constitution, the same Prince, after applauding the establishment of hereditary monarchy in the House of Saxony, (which, it must be particularly borne in mind, was a positive breach of the constitution guaranteed by Russia in 1775,) he proceeds to say, ‘ *I congratulate myself on having contributed to the liberty and independence of Poland; and my most agreeable care will be to preserve and strengthen the ties which unite us.*’ On the 21st of June, the Prussian minister, on occasion of alarm expressed by the Poles that the peace with Turkey might prove dangerous to them, declares, that if such dangers were to arise, ‘ the King of Prussia, faithful to all his obligations, will have it particularly at heart to fulfil those which were last year contracted by him.’ Thus did the Government of Prussia, three times after their knowledge of the new constitution, ratify and confirm the alliance with Poland, and expressly declare an attack by Russia, in consequence of that revolution, to be within the stipulations of the treaty. With the revolution of the 3d of May fully before him, the King of Prussia three times solemnly declared, that a war on account of that revolution was one of the cases comprehended in the defensive alliance. Had it been reasonable, then, to place any reliance on the faith of treaties, or on the honour of Kings, the republic of Poland might have confidently hoped, that, if she were attacked by Russia, in virtue of the guarantee of 1775, her independence and her constitution would be defended by the whole force of the Prussian monarchy.

The remaining part of the year 1791 passed in quiet, but not without apprehension. On the 9th of January 1792, Catharine concluded a peace with Turkey at Jassy: and being thus delivered from all foreign enemies, began once more to manifest intentions of interfering in the affairs of Poland; with respect to which she had for some

* Marten’s Rec. iii. 161 — 165.

† Ferrand, iii. 121. See the letter of the King of Prussia to Goltz, expressing his admiration and applause of the new constitution. *Segur, de Fred. Guil. II.* vol. iii. 252.

time before observed a very unusual degree of caution and forbearance. She was emboldened by the removal of Hertzberg from the councils of Prussia, and by the death of the Emperor Leopold, a prince of experience and prudence; and she resolved to avail herself of the disposition which then arose in the European Governments, to sacrifice every other object to preparation for a contest with the French Revolution. A small number of Polish nobles furnished her with that very slender pretext, with which she was always content. Their chiefs were Rzewuski, who, in 1768, had been exiled to Siberia, and Felix Potocki, a member of a potent and illustrious family, of whom all the rest were inviolably attached to the cause of the Republic. These unnatural apostates deserted their long suffering country at the moment when, for the first time, hope dawned on her, in order to aid the arms of her old, rancorous, treacherous, and cruel enemy. Perhaps no men were ever guilty of a more abominable and aggravated treason. They were received by Catharine with the honours due from her to the betrayers of their country. On the 12th of May 1792, they formed a Confederation at *Targowitz*. On the 18th, the Russian minister at Warsaw declared, that the Empress, ‘called on by many distinguished Poles who had confederated against the pretended constitution of 1791, would, in virtue of her guarantee, *march an army into Poland to restore the liberties of the Republic.*’

She soon after published a manifesto, in which, with her usual effrontery, she professed to justify her measures in *the sight of God and man*. She once more solemnly declared, that she would not violate the integrity of the Polish territory, and desired the Poles to rely on her well-known justice and magnanimity! This language, and these measures, however monstrous, were at least perfectly consistent with the whole system of Catharine towards Poland. Other hopes, as we have seen, might have been entertained of the King of Prussia. But these hopes were speedily and cruelly deceived. In May 1792, Lucchcsini, the Prussian minister at Warsaw, gave a vague and evasive answer to a communication made to him respecting the preparations for defence against Russia. He answered coldly, ‘that his master received the communication as a proof of the esteem of the King and Republic of Poland; but that he could take no cognizance of the affairs which occupied the Diet.’ Stanislaus also claimed his aid. On the 8th of June 1792, the King of Prussia answered, ‘*In considering the new Constitution which the Republic adopted, without my knowledge and without my concurrence, I never thought of supporting or protecting it.*’ Thus did Frederic William deny his own repeated declarations, bely his solemn engagements, and trample under foot all that is held most sacred among men. So signal a breach of faith is not to be found in the modern history of great states. It resembles rather the vulgar frauds and low artifices which, under the name of Reason of State, made up the policy of the petty usurpers and tyrants of Italy in the fourteenth century.

Assured of the connivance of Prussia, Catharine now poured an immense army into Poland, along the whole line of frontier, from the Baltic to the neighbourhood of the Euxine. The spirit of the Polish nation was unbroken; and the army displayed the most intrepid valour under Prince Joseph Poniatowski and General Thaddeus Kosciusko, who then began to signalize himself by that patriotic heroism which will for ever render his memory dear and venerable to all lovers of

their country. A series of brilliant actions occupied the summer of 1792, in which the Polish army, alternately victorious and vanquished, gave equal proofs of unavailing gallantry. Meantime Stanislaus remained in his capital, willing to be duped by the Russian and Prussian ambassadors, whom he suffered to continue at Warsaw.

He made a vain attempt to disarm the anger of the Empress, by proposing to her that her grandson Constantine should be the stock of the new Constitutional Dynasty. She haughtily replied, that he must re-establish the old Constitution, and accede to the Confederation of Targowitz. ‘Perhaps,’ says M. Ferrand, ‘because a throne acquired without guilt or perfidy might have few attractions for her.’* On the 4th of July, he published a proclamation, declaring that he would not survive his country. But, on the 22d of the same month, as soon as he received the commands of Catharine, this dastardly and pusillanimous Prince declared his accession to the Confederation of Targowitz; and thus threw the legal authority of the Republic into the hands of that band of conspirators. The gallant army, over whom the Diet had intrusted their unworthy King with absolute authority, were now compelled, by his treacherous orders, to lay down their arms amidst the tears of their countrymen, and the insolent exultation of their barbarous enemies.† The traitors of Targowitz were, for a moment, permitted by Russia to rule over the country which they had betrayed, to prosecute the persons and lay waste the property of all good citizens; and to re-establish every antient abuse. They sent a deputation to Petersburg, to thank the Empress for having *stopped the fatal progress of the monarchical spirit*, and restored the nation to its Republican Government. However strange it may appear, the principal charge made by Catharine and the Confederates against the Polish Revolution, was, that it introduced hereditary monarchy—that it promoted despotism—and was founded on the subversion of republican liberty.‡

Such was the unhappy state of Poland during the remainder of the year 1792, a period which will be always memorable for the invasion of France by a German army—their ignominious retreat—the eruption of the French forces into Germany and Flanders—the dreadful scenes which passed in the interior of France,—and the apprehension professed by all Governments of the progress of the opinions to

* Ferr. iii. 217. Corresp. between Stanislaus and Catharine. Id. 230—234.

† A curious passage of Thuanus shows the apprehension early entertained of the Russian power. At that time, the Great Duke of Muscovy possessed the port of Narva on the Baltic. ‘Livonis prudente et reipublicæ Christianæ utili consilio navigatio illuc interdicta fuerat, ne commercio nostrorum BARBARI varias artes ipsis ignotas, et quæ ad rem navalem et militarem pertinent edocerentur. Sic enim existimabant *Moscovos* qui maximam septentrionis partem tenerent, Narvæ condito emporio, et constructo armamentario non solum in Livoniam, sed etiam in Germaniam effuso exercitu penetraturos.’—*Thuan. Hist. Lib. xxxix. c. 8.*—*sub anno 1563.*

He goes on to say, that influenced by these fears, the Hanse Towns prohibited, under the severest penalties, all commerce with the Muscovite part of Narva. As Greece, he says, was overrun by the Turks when instructed in navigation by the Genoese, so the communication of the arts of war to the barbarians of Muscovy might expose all Europe to a like danger from them.

‡ The same accusation was urged against it from a diametrically opposite quarter, in a pamphlet published at Paris in 1792, by Mehée de la Touche, entitled, *Histoire de la prétendue Revolution de la Pologne, du 3 Mai 1791.*

which these events were ascribed. The Empress of Russia, among the rest, professed the utmost abhorrence of the French Revolution; made war against it by the most vehement manifestoes; stimulated every other power to resist it; but never contributed a battalion or a ship to the Confederacy against it. Whether, like others who wage war on the property of their neighbours, she excited or embroiled the affray, in order that she might pursue her depredations more safely, is a question which we have yet no materials to answer. Certain it is, that these events enabled her, without disturbance, to execute her designs against Poland. Frederic William plunged headlong into the coalition against the advice of his wisest counsellors.* Some circumstances of that extraordinary campaign are mentioned by M. Ferrand, as in some degree influencing the Partition of Poland, of which, on that account, it may be not altogether impertinent to give a short statement in this place. At the moment of the Duke of Brunswick's entry into France, in July 1792, if we may believe M. Ferrand, the ministers of the principal European powers met at Luxemburg, provided with various projects for new arrangements of territory, in the event which they thought inevitable, of the success of the invasion. The Austrian ministers betrayed the intention of their Court, to renew their attempt to compel the Elector of Bavaria to exchange his dominions for the Low Countries, which, by the dissolution of their treaties with France, they deemed themselves entitled again to propose. The King of Prussia, on this alarming disclosure, showed symptoms of an inclination to abandon an enterprise, which many other circumstances combined to prove was impracticable, at least with the number of troops with which he had presumptuously undertaken it. These dangerous projects of the Court of Vienna made him also feel the necessity of a closer connexion with Russia; and in an interview with the Austrian and Russian ministers at Verdun, he gave them to understand, that Prussia could not continue the war without being assured of an indemnity. Russia eagerly adopted a suggestion which engaged Prussia more completely in her Polish schemes. Austria willingly listened to a proposal which would furnish a precedent and a justification for similar enlargements of her own dominions; and the Imperial Courts declared, that they would acquiesce in the occupation of another portion of Poland by the Prussian armies.†

These statements are contained in the work of a zealous Royalist, who had evidently more than ordinary means of information. Such, according to his account, were the designs of the Coalesced Powers,—such were at least the projects of which they suspected each other,—and such were the plans finally adopted to prevent the Coalition from breaking to pieces, at the moment when they represented themselves to the world as the generous deliverers of France, and the disinterested champions

* Prince Henry and Count Hertzberg, who agreed perhaps in nothing else.—*Vie du Prince Henri*, 297. In the same place, we have a very curious extract from a Letter of Prince Henry, of the 1st November 1792, in which he says that ‘every year of war will make the conditions of peace worse for the Allies.’ Henry was not a Democratist, nor even a Whig. His opinions were confirmed by all the events of the first war, and are certainly not contradicted by occurrences towards the close of a second war, twenty years afterwards, and in totally new circumstances.

† Ferrand, iii. 252—255.

of social order. That such designs should be ascribed to these monarchs, by the warmest partisans of monarchy, — that such rumours should even be prevalent among well-informed men, are facts of great importance in helping us to conjecture what might have been the consequence of the success of their arms against France.

Whether in consequence of the supposed agreement at Verdun, or not, the fact at least is certain, that Frederic William returned from his French disgraces to seek consolation in the plunder of Poland. Nothing is more characteristic of a monarch without ability, without knowledge, without resolution, whose life had been divided between gross libertinism and abject superstition, than that, after flying before the armies of a powerful nation, he should instantly proceed to attack an oppressed people, whom he thought defenceless and incapable of resistance. In January 1793, he entered Poland; and, while Russia was charging the Poles with the extreme of Royalism, he chose the very opposite pretext — that they propagated anarchical principles, and had established Jacobin Clubs. To prevent the dangers which threatened his own dominion, he, with the acquiescence of the two Imperial Courts, had ordered General Mollendorff to occupy Great Poland. Even the criminal confederates of Targowitz were indignant at these falsehoods, and remonstrated, at Berlin and Petersburg, against the entry of the Prussian troops. But the complaints of such apostates against the natural results of their own crimes were heard with contempt. The Empress of Russia, in a declaration of the 9th April, informed the world that the only means of containing the Jacobinism of Poland, was ‘*by confining it within more narrow limits, and by giving it proportions which better suited an intermediate power.*’ She announced in this declaration, that she acted in concert with Prussia, and with the consent of Austria. The King of Prussia, accordingly, seized Great Poland; and the Russian army occupied all the other provinces of the republic. It was easy, therefore, for Catharine to determine the extent of her new robbery. In order, however, to give it some shadow of legality, the King was compelled to call a Diet, from which every man was excluded who was not a partisan of Russia, and an accomplice of the Confederates of Targowitz. That unhappy assembly met at Grodno in June; and, in spite of its bad composition, showed many sparks of Polish spirit. *Sievlers*, the Russian ambassador, a man apparently worthy of his mission, in order to subdue the Diet, had recourse to a long series of threats, insults, brutal violence, military imprisonment, arbitrary exile, and to every other species of outrage and intimidation which, for near thirty years, had constituted the whole system of Russia towards the Polish legislature. In one note, he tells them, that, unless they proceed more rapidly, ‘he shall be under the painful necessity of removing all incendiaries, disturbers of the public peace, and partisans of the 3d of May, from the Diet.’* In another, of the 16th of July, he apprizes the Diet, that he must consider any longer delay ‘as a declaration of hostility; in which case, the lands, possessions, and dwellings of the malcontent MEMBERS, MUST BE SUBJECT TO MILITARY EXECUTION’† — ‘If the King adheres to the Opposition, the military execution must extend to his demesnes. The pay of the Russian troops will be stopped, and they will live at the expense of the unhappy peasants.’ Grodno was surrounded by Russian troops; loaded cannon were pointed

* Ferrand, iii. 369. Pieces Justif.

† Ibid. 372.

at the palace of the King and the hall of the Diet; four nuncios were carried away prisoners by violence in the night; and all the members were threatened with Siberia. In these circumstances, the captive Diet were compelled, in July and September, to sign two treaties with Russia and Prussia, stipulating such cessions as the plunderers were pleased to dictate, and containing a repetition of the same insulting mockery which had closed every former act of rapine — a guarantee of the remaining possessions of the Republic.* They had the consolation to be allowed to perform one act of justice — that of depriving the leaders of the confederation of Targowitz, Felix Potoski, Rzewuski, and Braneki, of the great offices which they dishonoured. It will one day be discovered, from the intrigues and correspondence of the coalesced powers, whether it be actually true that Alsace and Lorraine were to have been the compensation to Austria for her forbearing to claim her share of the spoils of Poland at the period of the Second Partition. It is well known that the allied army refused to receive the surrender of Strasburgh in the name of Louis XVII., and that Valenciennes and Condé were taken in the name of Austria.

In the beginning of 1794, a young officer named *Madalinski*, who had kept together, at the disbanding of the army, eighty gentlemen, gradually increased his adherents, till they amounted to a little army of about four thousand men, who began to harass the Russian posts. The people of Cracow expelled the Russian garrison; and, on the night of the 28th of March, the heroic Kosciusko, at the head of a small body of adherents, entered that city, and undertook its government and defence. Endowed with civil as well as military talents, he established order among the insurgents, and caused the legitimate constitution to be solemnly proclaimed in the Cathedral Church, where it was once more hailed with genuine enthusiasm. He proclaimed a national confederation, and sent copies of his manifesto to Petersburg, Berlin, and Vienna; treating the two first courts with deserved severity, but speaking amicably of the third, whose territory he enjoined his army to respect.

The Austrian resident at Warsaw publicly disclaimed these marks of friendship, imputing to Kosciusko and his friends, ‘the monstrous principles of the French Convention’ — a language which plainly showed that the Court of Vienna, which had only consented to the last partition, was willing to share in the next. The army of Kosciusko was daily reinforced, and on the 17th of April rose on the Russian garrison of Warsaw, and compelled Igelstrom the commander, after an obstinate resistance of thirty-six hours, to evacuate the city with a loss of 2000 men wounded. The citizens of the capital, the whole body of a proud nobility, and all the friends of their country throughout Poland, submitted to the temporary dictatorship of Kosciusko, a private gentleman only recently known to the public, and without any influence but the reputation of his virtue. Order and tranquillity generally prevailed; some of the Burghers, perhaps excited by the agents of Russia, complained to Kosciusko of the inadequacy of their privileges. But this excellent chief, instead of courting popularity, repressed an attempt which might lead to dangerous divisions. Soon after, more criminal excesses for the first time dishonoured the Polish Revolution, but served to shed a brighter lustre on the humanity and

* Mart. Rec. v, 162. 202.

intrepidity of Kosciusko. The papers of the Russian embassy laid open proofs of the venality of many of the Poles who had betrayed their country. The populace of Warsaw, impatient of the slow forms of law, apprehensive of the lenient spirit which prevailed among the revolutionary leaders, and instigated by the incendiaries, who are always ready to flatter the passions of a multitude, put to death eight of these persons, and, by their clamours, extorted from the tribunal a precipitate trial and execution of a somewhat smaller number. Kosciusko did not content himself with reprobating these atrocities. Though surrounded by danger, attacked by the most formidable enemies, betrayed by his government, and abandoned by all Europe, having no doubt of the moral guilt of these prisoners, no resource but the irregular energy of the people, he flew from his camp to the capital, brought the ringleaders of the massacre to justice, and caused them to be immediately executed. We learn, from very respectable authority, that during all the perils of his short administration, he persuaded the nobility to take measures for a more rapid enfranchisement of the peasantry, than the cautious policy of the Diet had hazarded.*

Kosciusko, harassed by the advance of an Austrian, Prussian, and Russian army, concentrated the greater part of his army around Warsaw. Frederic William advanced against the capital at the head of 40,000 disciplined troops. Kosciusko, with 12,000 irregulars, made an obstinate resistance for several hours on the 8th of June, and retired to his entrenched camp before Warsaw. The Prussians took possession of Cracow, and summoned the capital to surrender, under pain of all the horrors suffered by towns which are taken by assault. After two months employed in vain attempts to reduce the city, the King of Prussia was compelled, by an insurrection in his lately acquired Polish province, to retire with precipitation and disgrace. But in the mean time, the Russians advanced in spite of the gallant resistance of General Count Joseph Sierakowski, one of the most faithful friends of his country. On the 4th of October, Kosciusko, with only 18,000 men, thought it necessary to hazard a battle at Macciwice, to prevent the junction of the two Russian divisions of Suwarrow and Fersen. Success was long and valiantly contested. According to some narrations, the enthusiasm of the Poles would have prevailed, if the treachery or incapacity of Count Poninski had not favoured the Russians.† That officer neither defended a river where he had been ordered to make a stand, nor brought up his division to support his general. Kosciusko, after the most admirable exertions of judgment and courage, fell, covered with wounds. The Polish army fled. The Russians and Cossacks were melted at the sight of their gallant enemy, who lay insensible on the field. When he opened his eyes, and learnt the full extent of the disaster, he vainly implored the enemy to put an end to his sufferings. The Russian officers, moved with admiration and compassion, treated his wounds with tenderness, and sent him, with due respect, a prisoner of war to Petersburg. Catharine threw him into a dungeon; from which he was released by Paul on his succession,

* M. Segur, *Regne de F. Guill.* II. tome iii. 169. These important measures are not mentioned in any other narration which we have read, and M. de S. gives no particulars of them.

† Segur, iii. 171. This statement is supported by the character of the writer, and by his opportunities of learning the truth from Kosciusko himself.

perhaps partly from hatred to his mother, and partly from one of those paroxysms of transient generosity, of which that brutal lunatic was not incapable.

From that moment the farther defence of Poland became hopeless. Suwarrow advanced to the capital, and stimulated his army to the assault of the great suburb of Praga, by the barbarous promise of a license to pillage for 48 hours. A dreadful contest ensued on the 4th of November, 1794, in which the inhabitants performed prodigies of useless valour, making a stand in every street, and at almost every house. All the horrors of war, which the most civilized armies practise on such occasions, were here seen with tenfold violence. No age or sex, or condition, was spared. The murder of children formed a sort of barbarous sport for the assailants. The most unspeakable outrages were offered to the living and the dead. The mere infliction of death was an act of mercy. The streets streamed with blood. Eighteen thousand human carcasses were carried away from them after the massacre had ceased. Many were burnt to death in the flames which consumed the town. Multitudes were driven by the bayonet into the Vistula. A great body of fugitives perished by the fall of the great bridge over which they fled. These tremendous scenes closed the resistance of Poland, and completed the triumph of her oppressors. The Russian army entered Warsaw on the 9th of November 1794. Stanislaus was suffered to amuse himself with the formalities of royalty for some months longer. In obedience to the order of Catharine, he abdicated on the 25th of November 1795 — a day which, being the anniversary of his coronation, seemed to be chosen to complete his humiliation. Quarrels about the division of the booty retarded the complete execution of the formal and final partition till the beginning of the year 1796.

Thus fell the Polish people, after a wise and virtuous attempt to establish liberty, and a heroic struggle to defend it — by the flagitious wickedness of Russia — by the foul treachery of Prussia — by the unprincipled accession of Austria — and by the short-sighted, as well as mean spirited, acquiescence of all the nations of Europe. Till the first partition, the sacredness of antient possession, the right of every people to its own soil, were universally regarded as the guardian principles of European independence. They gained strength from that progress of civilization, which they protected and secured; and the violation of them to a great degree seemed to be effectually precluded by the jealousies of great states, and by the wise combinations of the smaller communities. Confederacies were formed, long wars were carried on, to prevent the dangerous aggrandizement of states by legitimate conquest. To prevent a nation from acquiring the power of doing wrong to others was the great object of negotiation and war. These principles were just and wise; as the preservation of the balance of power was, in truth, the only effectual security of all independent nations against oppression. But in the case of Poland, a nation was robbed of its antient territory without the pretence of any wrong which could justify war, without even those forms of war which could bestow on the acquisition the name of conquest. It was not an attack on the balance of power — the great outwork of national independence; it was the destruction of national independence itself. It is a cruel and bitter aggravation of this calamity, that the crime was perpetrated under the pretence of the wise and just principle of maintaining the

equilibrium'—as if that principle had any value but its tendency to *prevent* such crimes—as if an equal division of the booty bore any resemblance to a joint exertion to prevent the robbery. But in truth, the equality of the Partition did not hinder it from being the very worst and most dangerous disturbance of the balance of power. It left the balance between three powerful states as it was before; but it destroyed the balance between the strong and the weak. It strengthened the strong; and it taught them how to render their strength irresistible by combination. In the case of private highwaymen and pirates, a fair division of the booty tends, no doubt, to the harmony of the gang and the safety of its members, but renders them more formidable to the honest and peaceable part of mankind.*

The Second and Third Partitions had all the evils of the first, and some which were peculiar to themselves. The first example of triumphant injustice produced the most lasting mischief; but there are some circumstances of a moral nature belonging to the events of 1793 and 1794, which are still more calculated to excite the general indignation of mankind. The worst consequence of the first partition was not the loss of territory. Still more destructive was the pretended guarantee of the new constitution, by which Catharine bound the Polish nation not to reform, without her consent, those institutions which had exposed them to anarchy, invasion, and partition. They were bound by this compact, to make no attempt to attain quiet at home or respectability abroad, even within the limits to which their oppressors had reduced them. This stipulation was as morally binding as one which should forbid a nation, which had suffered often by famine and pestilence, to provide against the return of those evils by tilling their fields, building lazarettos, or draining their fens. The breach of this compact, miscalled a treaty, which it was criminal to impose, and would have been equally criminal to perform, was the only wrong complained of by Catharine. She made war upon the people of Poland merely because they attempted to better their condition, by means as innocent as ever were employed to obtain an honest end.

For about eleven years the name of Poland was erased from the map of Europe. By the treaty of Tilsit, in 1807, the Prussian part of that unfortunate country was restored to as much independence as could then be enjoyed, under the name of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw; and this revived state received a considerable enlargement by the treaty of Schoenbrunn in 1809, at the expense of Austria. When Napoleon opened the decisive campaign of 1812, in what he called in his proclamations 'the Second Polish War,' he published a Declaration, addressed to the Poles, in which he announced that Poland would be greater than she had been under Stanislaus, and that the Archduke, who then governed Wurzburg, was to be their sovereign. On the 12th of July in that year, Wybicki, at the head of a deputation of the Diet, told him, at Wilna, with truth, 'The interest of your empire requires the re-establishment of Poland; the honour of France is interested in it.' He told the deputation in return, 'that he had done all that duty to his subjects allowed to restore their country; that he would second their exertions; and that he authorized them

* The sentiments of wise men on the First Partition are admirably stated in the Annual Register of 1772, in the Introduction to the History of Europe, which could scarcely have been written by any man but Mr. Burke.

‘ to take up arms, everywhere but in the Austrian provinces, of which he had guaranteed the integrity, and which he should not suffer to be disturbed.’* An answer too cold and guarded to inspire enthusiasm, and in which, it is remarkable, that he promises less than he had acquired the power of performing; for, by the secret articles of his treaty with Austria, concluded in March 1812, provision was made for an exchange of the Illyrian provinces (which he had retained at his own disposal) for such a part of Austrian Poland as would be equivalent to them.† What his real designs respecting Poland were, it is not easy to conjecture. That he was desirous of re-establishing that country, and that he looked forward to such an event as the result of his success, cannot be doubted. But he had probably grown too much of a politician and an emperor, to trust or to love that national feeling and popular enthusiasm to which he had owed the splendid victories of his youth. He was willing to owe every thing to his policy and his army. Had he thrown away the scabbard in this just cause; had he solemnly pledged himself to the restoration of Poland; had he obtained the exchange of Galicia for Dalmatia, instead of secretly providing for it; had he considered Polish independence, not merely as the consequence of victory, but as one of the most powerful means of securing it; had he, in short, retained some part of his early faith in the attachment of nations, instead of relying exclusively on the mechanism of armies; perhaps the success of that memorable campaign might have been more equally balanced. Seventy thousand Poles then fought under his banners.‡ Numerous bodies had served under him for sixteen years, and adhered to him even to his final defeat. Forty thousand are supposed to have fallen in the French armies from the destruction of Poland to the battle of Waterloo.§ There are few instances of the affection of men for their country more touching than that of these gallant Poles, who, in voluntary exile, amidst every privation, without the hope of fame, when all the world had become their enemies, daily sacrificed themselves in the battles of a foreign nation, in the faint hope of that nation’s one day delivering Poland from bondage. Kosciusko had originally encouraged his countrymen to devote themselves for this chance of restoring their country. But when he was offered a command in 1807, this perfect hero refused to quit his humble retreat, unless Napoleon would pledge himself for the restoration of Poland. When Alexander entered France in 1814, as the avowed patron of liberal opinions and institutions, Kosciusko addressed a letter to him||, in which he makes three requests,—that the Emperor would grant an universal amnesty, a free constitution, resembling, as nearly as possible, that of England, with means of

* How coolly does *M. Schoell*, counsellor of legation to his Prussian Majesty, ascribe the same principles to his sovereign. ‘ Quoiqu’il eut paru vouloir reconnoître la Constitution du 3 Mai, il est evident que le changement d’une republique livrée à l’anarchie en une monarchie bien constituée n’avoit rien qui put plaire à des voisins habitués à profiter des troubles qui agitoient ce pays.’—*Schoell Hist. de Trait.* xiv. 130.

A frank avowal of the principles of the Prussian government, on whom the writer in the same work lavishes the most fulsome panegyrics.

† *Schoell*, x. 129.

‡ *Ibid.* x. 139.

§ Notice Biographique sur Kosciusko, par M. Julien.

|| Published in M. Julien’s interesting little work.

general education, and, after the expiration of ten years, an emancipation of the peasants. It is but justice to Alexander to add, that when Kosciusko died, in 1817, after a public and private life worthy of the scholar of Washington, the Emperor, on whom the Congress of Vienna had bestowed the greater part of the duchy of Warsaw, with the title of King of Poland, allowed his Polish subjects to pay due honours to the last of their heroes; and that Prince Jablonowski was sent to attend his remains from Switzerland to Cracow, where they were interred in the only spot of the Polish territory which is now not dishonoured by a foreign master. We know not whether the same monarch has paid a still more acceptable tribute to his memory, by executing his pure intentions, and acceding to his disinterested prayers.

The partition of Poland was the model of all those acts of rapine which have been committed by monarchs or republicans during the wars excited by the French revolution. No single cause has contributed so much to alienate mankind from antient institutions, and loosen their respect for established Governments. When monarchs show so signal a disregard to immemorial possession and legal right, it is in vain for them to hope that subjects will not copy the precedent. The law of nations is a code without tribunals, without ministers, and without arms, which rests only on a general opinion of its usefulness, and on the influence of that opinion in the councils of States, and most of all, perhaps, on an habitual reverence, produced by the constant appeal to its rules even by those who did not observe them, and strengthened by the elaborate artifice to which the proudest tyrants deigned to submit, in their attempts to elude an authority which they did not dare to dispute. One signal triumph over such an authority was sufficient to destroy its power. Philip II. and Louis XIV. had often violated the law of nations; but the spoilers of Poland overthrew it.

In the first moments of the downfall of Napoleon's system, there appeared some symptoms of the return of the European Governments to wise and just principles. The French charter had many characters of a treaty of peace between new opinions and antient establishments: a principle which, if once adopted in such a country as France, seemed to promise undisturbed quiet and progressive reformation to Europe. The Emperor Alexander professed to be the leader of the liberal party in every part of the Continent. He offered new territory to the Canton of Berne, on condition that they would reform their constitution.* He agreed not only to give a free constitution to his new acquisitions in Poland, but to *intercede* with his Allies that they might bestow the same blessing on their Polish provinces.† The King of Prussia, on the 23d of May 1815, published a decree, by which he not only promises a popular representation and a general constitution to his people, but appoints a commission to propose a plan for 'the Provincial Assem-

* Rec. de Pieces Off. du Congres de Vienne, iv. 84.

† It should be observed, that the new kingdom of Poland, erected for Alexander in 1815, is composed solely of the Russian part of the Duchy of Warsaw, and does not comprehend the Polish provinces acquired by Russia in 1772, 1793, 1794, 1807, and 1809. He reserves to himself a power of giving it such an *interior extension* as he thinks fit;—a singular expression, by which is meant the right of incorporating with it the former Polish acquisitions of Russia, which are more than double the extent and population of this new kingdom.

'blies, the National Representation, and the frame of a constitution.'* All Europe, in short, appeared then to admit, that the return or the maintenance of old abuses was incompatible with the present state of European opinion. The House of Austria, and the counsellors of Ferdinand VII., formed the only considerable exceptions to this apparent unanimity.

It cannot be pretended, however, that the task of the Congress of Vienna was easy, either in the allotment of territory, or in the manner and extent of re-establishing governments. At the same time, it is clear, that if the great powers had been tolerably disinterested, the chief difficulties would have disappeared. The Congress must have been successful, if they had been honest; and there surely never was a moment when the policy of being honest had been taught to all governments by lessons so tremendous. To observe any general principle with inflexible uniformity might be impossible amidst such jarring interests, and is indeed seldom compatible with the unhappy condition of human affairs. But just principles may be looked to as guides, even when we cannot rigorously adhere to them as rules. The first and most sacred principle which ought to have governed the restoration of Europe was, that the vacant territory, though in form occupied by right of conquest, was in justice held as a trust for the European nations. Some nations wanted means, some opportunity, to throw off the yoke of France. None wanted inclination. All European communities, as far as in them lay, concurred in the effort to regain independence. In some places, a revolt of the people—in others, a mutiny of the army—in others, a breach of treaty by the government, manifested the general sentiment; but it was everywhere displayed. If one or two governments were withheld by their scruples or by their gratitude, or even by their fears, from taking a part in these generous irregularities so soon as the rest, their delay was atoned for by the zeal of their people, or was to be overlooked for the sake of general example.

The principle next in authority, perhaps, was the peculiar necessity of restoring nations to their territory who had been deprived of it with flagrant and shocking injustice, which bade defiance to the law of nations, and shook the security of all states. Neither the fatal celebrity of the events, nor the greatness, antiquity, and renown of the nations who had been spoiled, were indifferent circumstances; for they all contributed to make the triumph of injustice more conspicuous, and therefore to render the necessity of reparation greater. Such were the partitions of Poland. Such was the destruction of Venice, by a conspiracy of Austria with France, in 1797.

It must be numbered among the most remarkable eccentricities of the human mind, that many, in the year 1814, blamed the Allies for not inflicting punishment, who justified them for not making reparation. Surely the last is a duty of justice as clear as the first, more agreeable, and allowing fewer exceptions. It may often be wise to pardon the wrongdoer;—it can hardly ever be just not to satisfy the injured. Punishment is indeed useful as example, but so also is restitution.

* Ann. Reg. 1815, where, besides the general decree, are to be found two specific declarations to the same effect, addressed to the people of the *Polish* and *Saxon* provinces.

The transfer of conquests is rather an incentive to new conquest; but restoration to the old owner is the most effectual discouragement to new designs of aggrandizement.

Another great and comprehensive principle in all unions and divisions of territory is, that the most sacred regard is due to the opinions and feelings of the inhabitants; that their deliberate consent is the best foundation of such transactions; that their decisive repugnance ought to be a fatal objection to them; that it is fit to consult their preference to a form of government, or their attachment to the person or family of a sovereign; that it is proper to consider their having long lived together under the same laws, adopted the same manners, spoken the same language, loved the same country, and dreaded the same enemies; that it is unjust to tear men from each other who are bound together by these moral ties; and that it is tyrannical to subject them to the rule of antient and hereditary foes. These dictates of equity and humanity are independent of any opinion which may be formed on the principles of civil government; they are always, but especially after great convulsions, as much sanctioned by policy as by morality. Communities held together by such ties are alone secure. No others could be attached to their rulers, or ready to resist enemies. It was only by showing the utmost regard to the feelings of nations, that their loyalty could be revived.

If stern necessity should, in some very few cases, render the observance of these principles impossible, the highest equity required that nations or provinces, which should be in that case sacrificed to the general peace of Europe, should receive every compensation which it was in the power of conquerors to bestow; and more especially, that those institutions should be secured to them which they themselves desired, which would be conducive to their good government, and which might serve as some consolation for the loss of independence, or the dissolution of antient connexion. Besides, and perhaps even above, the observance of principles, the real restoration of Europe required that the conductors of so mighty an undertaking should display a spirit of disinterestedness, forbearance, sincerity, and good faith; that great empires should seek no accessions of dominion; that no governments should renew the acts of rapine which they were assembled to correct; and that the assembly of restorers should not dishonour their mission by the base and pettifogging expedient of confiscating, for their own purposes, the territory of one or two princes who had been slower in joining the general revolt than their neighbours. To take away territory for demerit, and to bestow it for merit, was to make all authority dependent on themselves, and to show Europe that it had only changed masters.

Few men have ever enjoyed such an opportunity of rendering great services to mankind as the Sovereigns and Ministers assembled at Vienna. By an approach to the principles which have just been stated, by an honest attempt to carry them into effect wherever it was possible, they would have united nations by firmer bonds, and secured them by stronger bulwarks; they would have attached the people to their rulers, and taught them to engraft reformation on established institutions; they would have rendered monarchy respectable, by an association with justice and liberty; they would have opened a long prospect of peace, prosperity, and improvement to the civilized world. The destroyers of the universal monarchy of France might have been

for ever revered as not only the deliverers, but the reformers of Europe.

But they were led by those who made the Partition of Poland; and they were influenced by the fatal maxims which produced that deplorable measure. Of the three offenders, it happened again, as it had before in 1772, that Prussia was far the most excusable. That monarchy required an enlargement of territory; but unexceptionable means of affording it were at hand if Frederic had been declared King of Poland, with the constitution of 1791, and with as much of the antient territory as could be yielded by the spoilers. But Alexander, the sovereign of the most extensive empire that the world ever saw, would not be satisfied if he did not join to it Poland; that perpetual memorial of the base and cruel ambition of his predecessors.* He confiscated Saxony, as a compensation which he was ready to compel Prussia to accept. His Ministers, imitating their predecessors at Warsaw and Grodno, gave Europe a foretaste of the arrogance of Russian domination; and before the Congress of Pacification had been two months† assembled, France, England, and Austria were compelled to form a defensive alliance against the threats and preparations of a new dictator. *These differences were compromised by a partition both of Poland and Saxony.* Austria, the third of the partitioning powers, showed, as before, less eagerness and less haughtiness, but, in substance, followed the example of Russia, by reviving the worst maxims of the Partition. Not content with Lombardy, placed without guardian institutions, under her absolute authority, she claimed and obtained Venice, and thus sanctioned the most faithless and lawless of all the acts which the Congress assembled to annul and repair. France had little influence at Vienna, but what the address of M. de Talleyrand found means to steal amidst the squabbles of others for prey, and which he employed to preserve Saxony, and to destroy Murat. England, no longer a passive spectator, as in the case of Poland, sacrificed the last hopes of Italy, by betraying Genoa, which, trusting to her proclamations, had taken up arms to expel the French, into the hands of her oldest enemy. The same spirit guided all the measures of the Allies before the Congress, and since its conclusion, as well as during its progress. From Norway‡, in 1813, to Parga, in 1819, there is not a single exception. Neither the illustrious Houses of Denmark and Saxony, nor the antient renown

* At the opening of the first Diet of the new kingdom of Poland, Alexander made one of the most modest declarations ever delivered from a throne. ‘I wish to observe toward Poland the Christian maxim of returning good for evil.’ This was addressed by the Sovereign of Russia to the unfortunate people of Poland!

† 6th January 1815. Schoell, xi. 56.

‡ Let our readers take their opinion of this transaction from unsuspected authorities. In the debate on the motion of Mr. Wynne, in May 1814, Mr. Canning said, ‘that he would pay any price of money or territory to get rid of the obligation.’ Mr. Wilberforce said, that ‘partitioning of States against their will was a most despotic sacrifice of public right.’—‘There was no sacrifice he would not make to prevent such an act of flagrant injustice.’ This language is the more decisive, because both these Gentlemen voted against Mr. Wynne’s motion, thinking the country bound to perform the compact which she had unfortunately entered into. In a protest, subscribed by Lord Grenville, the transfer of Norway is called ‘a manifest violation of the sacred rights of national independence.’

of Venice and Genoa, nor the inoffensive feebleness of the republics of Lucca and Ragusa, could divert them from their course. Instead of any regard to the opinions, feelings, prejudices, rights, or possessions of nations, the Congress considered only the number of square miles, or of human beings, which were allotted to each prince. These insulting calculations of an arithmetic equally false and profligate, which had first appeared in the division of the Polish spoils, were now applied to a great portion of Europe. The symmetry of a map, the strength of a frontier, the line of a mountain, the course of a river, were now to regulate the distribution of men and territory, while all those moral bands which hold nations together were torn asunder. Principles of *rounding* a territory, and following natural limits, or, in other words, the substitution of convenience for property, and of might for right, were openly avowed, and uniformly acted on. Instead of securing nations *as they were*, the pretended restorers tried to fabricate a new system of stronger states, of which the security was entirely to depend on soldiers and fortresses, mountains and rivers, without the slightest regard to the feelings and principles of human nature; an attempt as unexampled as unreasonable, as daring and as insolent as any of the acts of the revolutionary leaders from whose hands they professed to deliver Europe.

This new system, founded entirely on physical and military principles, or, in plain language, on the interest and strength of the Partitioning Powers, contradicted, as might be expected in many instances, the policy which allows some consideration of the moral nature of man. But the opposition between them is perhaps in no respect more remarkable than in their influence on the lot of the inhabitants of a frontier or of a detached territory. The modern system sacrifices them without mercy to its scheme of lines and squares, and always unites them to those neighbours against whom they usually entertain the strongest prejudices, and with whom they have often been engaged in the most cruel hostility.* The old system, on the contrary, spared the prejudices, consulted even the antipathies of these borderers, and considered it as a great principle of national honour, and therefore of the highest policy, to cling to those who are most attached to their country, because they are most frequently opposed to her enemies. Some part of the actual proceedings of the Congress of Vienna furnishes also a very striking illustration. The King of Saxony is one of the oldest and most popular princes in Europe; and, so strong is the attachment of his very enlightened subjects, that it has lately outweighed their disapprobation of a refusal, in his circumstances peculiarly impolitic, to amend the national representation. This consideration, however, seems entirely to have been kept out of view at Vienna. When they were considering the propriety of forcing Saxony to become a province of its old neighbour, rival, and enemy, Prussia, the only difficulty which occurred to them was, where to find a sufficient number of souls and square miles to form a new kingdom for the dispossessed king. They offered him the choice of seven hundred thousand souls, either on the

* The application of this remark to Norway, to Genoa, and Saxony, is too obvious to require any comment; nor is it any answer to appeal to the apparent acquiescence in Norway. The morality of the Norwegian people is quiet and submissive, to say nothing of the compensation of political liberty. The example loses nothing of its malignity from the happy issue of a single instance.

left bank of the Rhine or in Westphalia. The King of Prussia was willing to cast off that part of his subjects; the people of Saxony were to be forced to renounce their sovereign. A plantation of proper extent and fertility, with the requisite number of slaves, was the object sought; and the Prince would indeed be unreasonable, who should complain, after being allowed to choose between two of these productive estates. It was in this manner that the Congress showed their esteem for the attachment of a people to their sovereign, and taught the difference between the old system which adapts territory to nations, and the new policy which cuts out nations so as to fit territory. So insolent an avowal of contempt for mankind is, perhaps, more intolerable than a considerable degree of practical misgovernment; and if the alternative were inevitable, would determine every generous mind to prefer the wildest chimeras of equality to such a degradation of human nature.* It is now two centuries since the excellent GROTIUS, in spite of all his circumspection and moderation, applied still stronger language to the transfer of nations, in speaking of the cession of the Netherlands by Philip II. to Albert and Isabella.

‘ Erant qui pravum morem arguerent, quod *libera hominum capita, ceu privatum servitium, in censu et commercio haberentur. BARBARIS certe usurpatum, ut imperia donarent legarentque, quippe ignaris Domino Princeps quid intersit, at quibus aliud fas ac nefas minimè his ambiguum, REM ESSE POPULI, INDEQUE DICI REMPUBLICAM.*’† — *Grot. Hist. de Reb. Belgicis. lib. vii.*

To this exhibition of the general principles of the Congress as a collective body, we shall add only two remarkable specimens of the policy of its two most powerful members. In the year 1806, Sweden was the ally of Russia and Great Britain against France. The French government offered to obtain for her Norway, and the vast provinces lost by Charles XII., on condition of her breaking with Russia. Sweden resisted the temptation, and adhered to the faith of treaties.‡ In the following year it pleased the Emperor Alexander to change his allies, and to connect himself with Napoleon. He required Sweden to follow his example, and to take measures of hostility against England. Sweden braved his threats, and adhered to the faith of treaties. For this offence, Alexander made war upon her; and having invaded Finland in the beginning of 1808, after employing his ambassador to corrupt Swedish generals, and his commanders to stir up revolt and to excite mutiny, he made himself master of the province — he annexed it to his empire — and compelled Sweden to enter into the Continental system in hostility against Great Britain, and in concert with his allies the Emperor of France and *the King of Denmark and Norway*. Thus was Sweden robbed of a province which had been annexed to the crown for many centuries, and which formed the third part of the monarchy, for the crime of having adhered to the faith of treaties.

In four years after, the Emperor Alexander once more changed his alliances. He entered into an alliance with Sweden, and afterwards with England, against France. Russia and Sweden had just grounds

* Schoell, xi. 53.

† Though the language is put into the mouth of certain objectors, it is evident, from the whole context, that it conveys the opinion of the historian.

‡ Schoell, xiv. 185.

of complaint against the French government; but Denmark had been driven into the arms of France by circumstances, which, to say the least, rendered the connexion more excusable in her than in any other state; and she does not appear to have received any injury from France, which, according to the common morality between nations, could release her from the obligations of the treaty. Alexander had contributed to form the alliance between France and Denmark. But it being *convenient* to him, in the spring of 1812, to make an alliance with Sweden; it being also *convenient* for him to retain Finland, to improve his military frontier*; and it being *convenient* for Sweden to receive Norway as an equivalent for Finland, on the principle of *rounding* her territory, these two powers concluded a treaty, by which the Emperor bound himself to unite Norway to Sweden; to endeavour to persuade the King of Denmark to cede Norway on amicable terms, and on promise of indemnity; but, in case of his contumacy, to effect the union by the usual means of fire and sword.† It does not appear, that, previous to this treaty, any proposition was made to Denmark to renounce her alliance with Napoleon. On the contrary, the Emperor of Russia cannot be said to have been so much as formally at war with Denmark when the treaty was concluded, since the Danish minister continued at Petersburg for a year after its conclusion. In 1813, England acceded to this treaty of dismemberment, after the Court of Copenhagen had made overtures of peace, and the King of Denmark was required at the same time to renounce the alliance of Napoleon, and to resign the crown of Norway. Thus did Russia punish Denmark for adhering to the faith of treaties; and thus, by the spoliation of Denmark, did she find means of making compensation to Sweden for a former spoliation equally atrocious.

The only example which remains to be stated is taken from the policy of Austria, who, at the very moment of concluding the negotiations of Vienna, adopted a measure which was equivalent to a renewal of the very worst principles of the Partition of Poland. No part of that nefarious transaction has been more severely condemned by the unanimous voice of Europe, than the pretended treaties in which Catharine II. forced the Poles to promise that they would perpetuate their own misrule, and for ever abstain from reforming the abuses of their government. Austria copied this precedent. On the 12th of June 1815, a treaty was signed at Vienna between Austria and Naples, containing the following article, which was for a considerable time kept secret:

‘ It is understood by the High Contracting Parties, that his Majesty the King of the two Sicilies, in re-establishing the government of his kingdom, *will not admit any changes irreconcilable either with antient monarchical institutions, or with the principles adopted by his*

* It is deeply to be lamented, that an English statesman should have given any countenance to this execrable principle, by urging it as an extenuation of the treaty between Russia and Sweden; and it is an additional subject of regret, that he should be Lord Liverpool. (Speeches on Norway in 1812 and 1813.) The advantage which the possession of Finland gave to Sweden in wars against Russia was one of those local accidents which formed an element of the balance of power, by compensating, in some measure, to weaker states for the inequalities of national strength. It secured to Sweden the alliance of some of the greatest powers in Europe. The question was, whether Petersburg should be secured from insult, or Sweden from conquest.

† Hansard's Debates, xxvi. 677.

‘ IMPERIAL AND APOSTOLIC MAJESTY FOR THE INTERIOR GOVERNMENT
‘ OF HIS ITALIAN PROVINCES.’

Now, the government of Lombardy is what our forefathers would have called foreign despotism, and what even the Congress of Vienna must admit to be an unlimited monarchy. The above article is therefore a contract professing to bind a king to admit no limitations on his own prerogatives, however wise and moderate, however essential, in his own opinion, to the good government of his dominions, however called for by the unanimous voice of his people, nay, however, for that reason, necessary to the security of his throne!

Thus have we stated, on incontrovertible evidence, the nature and effects of those principles of policy by which the independence of the European nations received the first blow in the Partition of Poland;—which were adopted by revolutionists in the great commotions which afterwards distracted Europe;—which have been renewed, and are now avowed, by those who gave the first fatal example of their application. On occasion of the revolution at Naples, the Partitioning Monarchs met at Troppau and Laybach in the winter of 1820. By their acts and by their declarations, they now, for the first time, extended the pretexts on which they had entered Poland to all states where any reform of absolute monarchy was attempted, which did not originate in the absolute monarch himself.* The language of that assembly was a continued claim to the sovereignty of Europe. Their power was exerted towards Italy; but their principles were declared by themselves to comprehend all nations. ‘ They will always mark rebellion. Wherever it appears, and they can reach it, they will repress, condemn, and combat its work.’† With so little disguise did they claim the sovereignty of Europe, that Count Nesselrode thinks it necessary to disavow any design on the part of his master ‘ to invade’ at that time ‘ the western territories of Europe;’ a new denomination used in Muscovite geography to denote the obscure provinces of France and Spain. That Great Britain was also comprehended under the tutelar supremacy of the spoilers of Poland, if it had not been otherwise obvious, was perfectly ascertained by the noted Circular of the British Government of the 19th January 1821, which was published as a protest against their principles, as subversive of the law of nations, inconsistent with the independence of states, and ‘ *in direct repugnance to the fundamental laws of this country*’—which last alarming expressions were afterwards allowed by the authors of the Circular to refer to a proposal for the introduction of foreign armies into England, to afford the same security to free debate which had been enjoyed under their protection at Warsaw and Grodno. These great Powers, it seems, disdained the paltry consideration that what they proposed would be an infraction of the most important provision in the Bill of Rights; a breach of the most sacred condition on which the King of Great Britain holds his throne.

Those who thus claim in effect the dominion of Europe, and, with it, that of the world, are now assembled at Verona to deliberate on farther measures for the consolidation of their authority. Their direct power

* Count Nesselrode’s Circular, 10th May 1821. ‘ The monarchical principle rejects every institution which is not determined on by the monarch himself, in the exercise of his own free will.’ Berlin Court Gazette, 19th December 1820.—(from authority).

† Prussian Circular, 5th June 1821.

is exercised over the whole Continent, except France and Spain. The princes of the south of Germany, however reluctantly, must obey. The government of France is regarded as a friend, the temper of whose still agitated subjects requires a union of constant vigilance, with the utmost management. The Spanish peninsula, on the other hand, is considered as a rebel province, which it is not, for the present, convenient to reduce to obedience, partly from the fear of stubborn resistance by its inhabitants, partly from obstacles raised by the political apprehensions of some great powers. It is uncertain whether they will not rivet the chains of Italy, and legalize the military domination of Austria, by imposing on that unhappy country the vain and treacherous forms of a confederacy. It is certain, in spite of solemn declarations to the contrary, that great jealousy and frequent differences prevail among the three allied potentates. Prussia, fluctuating between the fear of Russia and the dread of reformation, is not a hearty and determined member of the alliance. Though Italy could not have been reduced to an Austrian province without the countenance and support of Russia, the Court of Vienna is at least as jealous as she was fifty years ago of the aggrandizement of her too formidable ally. Dreading internal reformation less than Prussia, and more capable of making a stand against immediate attack, she probably takes a more steady view of the unvarying progress of the Muscovite empire. It is difficult to trace any uniform principle in the policy of England, which seemed at first, in fact, though not in form, a member of the Holy Alliance; which since, by laws against aliens and foreign enlistments, declared for all governments against all insurrections; but which, since the invasion of Italy in 1821, has, in public acts, solemnly protested against the fundamental principles of the three allies. It is clear, that both Austria and England have not, for some months, been on cordial terms with Russia. The fear of Russian aggrandizement seems likely to produce good consequences to Spain, and very unhappy effects in Greece. These appearances naturally abate our dread of the confederacy. But we must not forget, that, by the discovery of partition, the means of settling such differences are always at hand. It was to preserve the Turkish empire, to find a compensation to Russia for the share of Turkey which she coveted, to maintain the balance between *the three Powers*, and to ensure against the danger of general war, that Poland was dismembered in 1772. There is one other remarkable coincidence between the events of that period and those which may now impend over us. *At the dismemberment of Poland, peace was preserved by the sacrifice of the Greeks.* Twice, in the course of less than a century, have the Russians made that cruel sacrifice before. When the celebrated Marechal Munich conceived the design of restoring an Eastern empire in 1736, he excited the Greeks to revolt, and they listened to his call. By the treaty of Belgrade, in 1739, they were abandoned to the rage of their cruel tyrants. When the same ambitious project was revived in 1770 by Catharine, the Greeks were excited to insurrection by numerous emissaries, by solemn assurances, and even by the appearance of a Russian fleet on the coast of Peloponnesus. At the treaty of Kaynardji, in 1774, they were once more left to the mercy of the Barbarians. It remains to be seen whether, after being encouraged, by a series of acts on the part of Russia, more decisive than any verbal declarations, by the recal of the Russian ambassador from Constantinople, by the advance of Russian

armies to the frontiers, by the knowledge that their interests were the object of warm and angry negotiation, they are once more to be delivered up to tyrants, who have not the power, if they had the will, to protect them from a ferocious populace, and from a soldiery formidable only to their Government and their countrymen. As the struggle of the oppressed has been more determined, the revenge of the tyrants will be more barbarous than on former occasions. The misfortune will now be attended with many aggravations. It will occur at a time when the Greeks have made great advances in commerce, in wealth, in intelligence, in literature, and in a familiarity with the opinions and institutions of other Christian nations; when they are more ripe for independence, and will feel slavery with more poignant pain. Their sufferings will be imbittered by the knowledge, that even the general sympathy of Europe is unable to turn aside the destroyers from them; repressed as it is by the general conviction, that the sinister policy of the predominating Governments would render its display unavailing.*

AUSTRIA.†

Two popular writers, De Pradt and Dupin, have lately terrified the world with their pictures of two political Giants,—the one all covered with gold, the other with iron—England and Russia. But while the eyes of Europe have been thus anxiously directed to these colossal powers, and taught to watch their slightest movements, and to penetrate their most secret thoughts, they have been allowed to overlook a power situated, as it were, in the plain between them, which, under another aspect, is not perhaps less deserving of their attention.

Although these authors differ in many points, they seem to agree in thinking, that the equilibrium of Europe, and the independence of its states, are particularly menaced by the preponderating power of Russia. There is prudence at least in the warning; and some reason, perhaps, for the apprehension which it excites. The dangers arising from the abuse of military power are always the most imminent, and the loss of national independence is no doubt the worst of all calamities. But there are influences nearly as overwhelming as force; and the evils of conquest itself are mainly affected by the character of the power which prevails. If there exist, therefore, a power in Europe which labours systematically to roll back the tide of civilization, and to bury alive the people whom it holds in bondage,—a power which, like an opaque body, intercepts the light which is growing around it,—whose prosperity, whose very existence, seems to depend on the suppression of all knowledge,—is it not equally worthy of our curiosity—and our fear? Our readers will easily perceive that we allude to AUSTRIA,—the *head* of that *Holy Alliance* which will one day undoubtedly be regarded as the most formidable conspiracy ever entered into against the liberties of mankind.

But head though she be of that portentous confederacy, and boast-

* On the Partitions of Poland there is an interesting article in Vol. xxii. page 294. It was currently reported, when the foregoing Essay first appeared, that it was from the pen of Sir James Mackintosh.

† *Qu'est que c'est l'Austrie?*—Vol. xl. page 298. July, 1824.

ful of the vile distinction, we do not think it surprising that Austria has hitherto attracted but little notice as an influencing member of the European community. There is something characteristically and intentionally *obscure* in her movements and her policy;—and the dull monotony of her existence, her affected gravity, the silence which reigns over the vast extent of her territory, and the unintellectual luxury of her capital, have repelled curiosity, and almost disarmed censure. One almost wonders at the courage of Coxe, who some years ago ventured on the task of writing a history, consisting only of a series of wars, undignified by any traits of heroism or military glory;—and yet this history, though written with the view of paying court to the reigning family, must be admitted to display so much of English frankness and impartiality, as to excite the wonder of those it was intended to please. But though the learned author has stated, fairly enough, the historical facts which he undertook to record, he could not venture, consistently with the plan he had adopted, to deduce from them those inferences to which we think they naturally lead; and which we shall now, therefore, endeavour to embody in the shape of some general remarks on the genius, principles, strength, and policy of this monarchy. They could not, we think, be offered with more propriety than at the present moment, when Italy is groaning under the weight of this dead force, and Greece, in her second birth, is in danger of being crushed by its co-operation.

A monarchy, which has extended itself for six centuries, without the aid of great men or great institutions—which has held on its course calmly in the midst of disgraceful disasters and ruinous defeats—which makes war without money and without credit—which, with a population equal to that of France, and a territory still more extensive, has always been unable to cope with it in the field or in the treasury—a monarchy composed of four states, speaking four different languages, by three of which the government is detested, and yet always obeyed—a monarchy which has been trampled on, and insulted in its seat, by Gustavus Adolphus, Kara Mustapha, Louis XIV., and Napoleon—which possesses a capital as luxurious as any in Europe, and universities and literary institutions scattered over its provinces, while half its population is as rude and barbarous as that of Turkey—a monarchy which is a combination of all these contradictions, is a political enigma which can be solved only by an analysis of each of the separate elements of its political power.

And first, with regard to the great element of *Religion*, in regard to which the characteristic selfishness of its policy has always been conspicuous. The court of Rome has ever been a dangerous friend, and a still more formidable enemy to the Catholic monarchies. The Emperors of Germany, when at war with the Popes, lost the obedience of their subjects, their power, and their crown. Henry IV. passed three nights in the snow on his knees to obtain pardon from Gregory VII. Frederic Barbarossa, after having been compelled to hold the stirrup of the Pope in Venice, fell in the East, fighting, at his instigation, for the faith. The Kings of Spain, on the contrary, too anxious to preserve the friendship of Rome, ruined their kingdom by their complaisance, banished its most industrious inhabitants by the terrors of the Inquisition, and filled their place by a population of monks. It has always indeed been a difficult task to choose between the friendship or the hostility of this proud theocracy: but Austria, after a

little experience, contrived to steer very dexterously between these opposite dangers. Without any impulse of zeal or bigotry, she was intolerant till the middle of last century. She established the Jesuits at an early period, frequently abandoned to their guidance the affairs of the state, and intrusted them with the education of her princes; but she never would consent to share her power with the Popes. The Emperors style themselves apostolic, and pay a voluntary homage to Rome; but they acknowledge no compulsory authority. Maximilian, the son of Ferdinand, in his public address to the head of the church, on his election as King of the Romans, substituted the word *obsequium* for *obedientiam*. Even Charlemagne and Napoleon were vain enough to be crowned by Popes: but the emperors of Austria, on the contrary, have endeavoured from the first to discredit the practice of receiving the crown from the hands of the Pontiff. Nature indeed seems to have endowed them with some peculiar power of resisting the thunders of the Vatican. When the Archduke Rodolph was threatened with excommunication by the Pope, he used to say, that within his own dominions he was himself Pope, Archbishop, Bishop, Archdeacon, and Priest: and his successors have religiously adhered to the maxim of exercising within their own states all the powers of the church. The Emperor Maximilian endeavoured to organize a general council in Germany, to control the pretensions of the Court of Rome. Charles VI. pensioned the historian Giannone for opposing the pretended supremacy of the church over the kingdom of Naples. Joseph II. ventured, when he pleased, on the boldest reforms in religion within his dominions. He encouraged the publication of the *Monocologia*, a satire against the monks, somewhat similar to the *Guerre des Dieux* which appeared at the Revolution. Instead of walking with the penitential haircloth to Rome, he brought Pius VI., in 1786, a suppliant to his capital: and the reigning monarch, though he inculcates religion in public and private, though he has paid a visit to the Pope in Rome, and restored to him eighteen pictures which belonged to the Pinacotheca of Milan, allows no papal bull to be published within his dominions without his previous sanction; and certainly has never dreamed of restoring to the monks the property they possessed before the Revolution. And if, in former times, Austria used to consign her heretical subjects to Rome, as to a common centre, for trial and punishment, Italy now repays the obligation by placing in the hands of Austria her political delinquents.

The key to all this is, that the love of power, like that of money, renders even the dullest intelligent. If Austria showed dexterity in emancipating herself from the papal yoke, she showed no less obstinacy in resisting the reformation in Germany. No sooner did she perceive that the tendency of the reformed religion was to render men less submissive to despotism, than she reared the standard of intolerance. She needed not the aid of any impulse from Rome; for it was not superstition or bigotry which led her to wage a war of extermination against the reformed opinions, but her dread of the political consequences which they appeared to involve. The treachery and cruelty with which she proceeded against the Hussites in Bohemia are well known. Charles V. and Ferdinand II. covered Germany and Holland with blood and fire to extirpate Protestantism; and the same scenes of cruelty were repeated in Bohemia for the same purpose. But Austria was politic as well as cruel; and when she had at last been

taught, by the experience of centuries, that her opponents were not less resolute in resistance than she herself in persecution, she wisely relaxed the system of intolerance from the fear of wasting her own strength, and was induced to grant a temporary repose both to the Protestant States of Germany, and her own Protestant subjects. The thirty years' war, while it exhausted both herself and her opponents, had convinced her that the risk of the contagion of the reformed doctrines, or at least of their political tendencies, had in a great measure ceased; that the furious zeal which had at first been roused by the rapid spread of Protestantism, was on the decline; and that, in order to preserve the supremacy of Germany, it was necessary that the toleration which she accorded should be sincere. In order, therefore, to calm the fears of the Protestant States, and regain their confidence, she began by granting protection and toleration to her own Protestant subjects. If this government is revengeful, it is more from calculation than passion; and accordingly it never allows its resentment to get the better of its reason, or pushes its vengeance so far as to injure itself. Its policy is slow and temporizing, indeed, and hence it has been looked upon by many with contempt. But when was it mistaken in its calculations? The truth is, that selfishness, assisted by cool reflection, and unchecked by any sense of honour, can seldom go wrong. The instant that Austria ceased to persecute, she regained the supremacy of the German empire, which she continued exclusively to exercise down to the reign of Frederic II. From that period Protestant Germany, having a natural protector in Prussia, has possessed a surer guarantee for the sincerity of Austrian toleration; and accordingly, that Government now allows an equal protection to the Calvinist and Lutheran doctrines, with all their modifications, and to three millions of Greeks, Schismatics, Jews, Moravians, &c.

Thus Austria, guided solely by an unbending principle of self-interest, emancipated herself early from the Papal authority — protected the Jesuits, and availed herself of their services while they were necessary to her — banished them when these services were no longer required, — and finally became tolerant, not from feeling but from necessity, when she saw that bigotry was generally on the decline.

The next preponderating ingredient in political power is *the army*: and Europe, which has seen Austria struggle for twenty-two years against the gigantic power of France, must at least applaud her perseverance. De Pradt himself, who is not generally inclined to deal in panegyric, observes, ‘resister est l'attribut caracteristique de cette puissance, qui endure tres bien les echecs; et qui, ayant l'habitude des revers, a fort bien appris à les supporter, comme à en rappeler.’

What then is the principle of this passive courage, this power of resistance? It is, we think, to be found in the abundance of a population, vile in the eyes of its rulers, and of which the Government can dispose almost at its pleasure. Austria is poor in money and heroism, — but she is rich in men! Her perseverance is not at all akin to that of antient Rome, which never made peace till victory enabled her to dictate the terms. Austria, on the contrary, has repeatedly submitted to save her existence by passing under the yoke. She never gives quarter, but she has no objection to receive it. With all this command of men, however, the miserable state of her finances will not allow her to bring great armies at once into the field. While Louis XIV. had 400,000 men in arms, Austria could with difficulty embody 70,000. In

1756 she raised 100,000, to oppose the King of Prussia with 200,000. In 1792 she took the field with 170,000, against France with an army of 600,000. In spite of the numerous subsidies which she draws from other countries, she still remains poor. During the last war, notwithstanding the immense loans which she received from England, she was obliged to have recourse to a paper currency, and five times failed in her engagements with her creditors. But if her poverty prevents her from raising large armies, she can recruit them easily—for the materials are never wanting. Her strength, therefore, is not shown by one but by successive efforts. What she wants in *extension*, she makes up in *depth*. As she can dispose of men like property, her conscriptions have no limit, not even that which high prices usually put upon the consumption of other articles; for in Austria the expenses of living, of clothing, of education, &c. do not amount to the fifth part of what they do in England. It is the small value of individual lives which explains how such immense armies were consumed by the Eastern governments, by Turkey, and by the Crusades. England, from a contrary cause, has always been sparing of men.

It is this *continuous* force which Austria possesses, that affords the key to her unwearied obstinacy in war; to the interminable campaigns of Charles V.; his extravagant expeditions to Africa; the thirty years' war; the war of the succession of Spain; that of the succession of Charles VI.; the second seven years' war against the King of Prussia; and, lastly, the twenty-two years' war against the French Revolution. The armies of Austria, if they are not immortal for their heroism, may be said to be so by the rapidity of their resurrection. Napoleon, in order to make himself master of Upper Italy, in 1796, was obliged to destroy five armies in one year. The best plan, therefore, of vanquishing Austria is that which Napoleon in all his campaigns adopted, of invading and surprising her, without leaving her time to recover herself. Give her breathing-time, and she will soon recruit her armies, from her immense depôts in Hungary, Transylvania, and Croatia.

Among all the automata that allow themselves to be slaughtered for five-pence per day, the Austrian soldier is the most deserving of compassion. The chastisement which awaits him for the slightest offences is the most ignominious that can be inflicted; the reward of his toils and his bravery, the most miserable that can be given. The food, the pay, and the clothing of the Austrian are inferior to those of any other soldier in Europe. Life, where men are at all trained to reflection, is not a thing to be bought for a sordid price. It may be gifted, but cannot be sold. To dispel these illusions of honour which animate the soldier, is to deprive the military profession of its only redeeming quality. The Greeks and Romans fought for the name of their country; the French for Francis I.—for Henry IV.—for Napoleon—for France—for glory; the Turks for their religion. But the Austrian soldier fights neither for loyalty, nor religion, nor honour. He never sees a king at the head of an army. He is scarcely aware that he has an emperor. From the first existence of the empire, only a single enthusiastic movement is to be found among the Hungarians, when, in the presence of their suppliant *Queen*, they exclaimed, '*Moriamur pro Rege nostro Maria Theresa.*' Almost ignorant of his general's existence, the Austrian soldier can feel no enthusiastic attachment to him. Frequently these generals are strangers, such as Tilly, Montecuculli, Eugene, Lacy, &c. The jealous policy of the Court will not allow the

generals to court popularity, or to appeal to the feelings of their followers. Twice only have the Austrian troops showed any thing like enthusiasm for their generals — for Prince Eugene and for Laudon. In this age, in which prodigies of valour have been effected by military eloquence, the Austrian government has allowed nothing but a brief proclamation at the opening of each campaign, commanding obedience, rather than rousing to effort. No triumphal arches — no annalist to record his exploits — no monuments to attest his victories, present themselves to the imagination of the Austrian soldier. Nor can his courage be much animated by the prospect of a medal, which he must look upon rather as a badge of inferiority, than as an honour, since it is never worn by the officers; while the officers, in turn, can have no strong incentive to exertion in the hope of obtaining the Cross of Maria Theresa, the requisites for which are too numerous and too difficult.

Armies such as these make no rapid conquests, and give little employment to fame. But, in return, a force of this kind, being almost entirely *material* in its nature, is exempt from those alterations which disturb the action of moral power. The government, accordingly, calculates its strength numerically; and reckons not by souls, but bodies. Though fitter for resistance than aggression, this strength has always aimed at conquest when it promised to be safe and easy; and, resting her projects on a definite and arithmetical basis, has adopted a slow and cautious system of usurpation, and shown the most determined obstinacy in retaining what she has once acquired. With the armies which Austria has sacrificed to preserve the duchy of Milan and the Low Countries, and to recover Silesia, Charles XII. would have conquered the world. In a word, Austria acquires with difficulty, but she never abandons her acquisitions. The cession or the restitution of a province feels like a dismemberment; for all that she acquires she incorporates. She cannot forget any thing she has once possessed. Maria Theresa, whenever Silesia, which she had ceded to Frederic, was mentioned, used to exclaim, in a tone of emotion, ‘I feel it in my heart!’ Although Austria had recognised the Cisalpine Republic by the treaty of Campo Formio, when she re-entered Italy in 1799, she annulled the sales of national property, and chastised, as rebels, all the Italians who had entered into the service of the Republic. In the wars of 1805 and 1809, the Italian officers who were made prisoners were reproached as *rebels* to the House of Austria; and, in 1814, when she took violent possession of the Italian provinces, she announced that she was about to re enter her *old dominions*! For Austria there is no such thing as prescription. Her titles of property subsist from the beginning to the end of time. Treaties she looks upon merely as truces, that enable her to recover breath and vigour for the next attack. Like the Court of Rome, she can bend to circumstances; but is always ready to revive her pretensions. Should the opportunity occur, Rome would be ready again to assert, as she did under Alexander VI., her universal supremacy, and again to demand from England the homage and tribute due by a vassal to his lord. In all her treaties, Austria has the same convenient mental reservations. The knowledge that she possesses twenty-eight millions of subjects, with whom she can play the game of war for ever, inspires her with an avarice like that of the Athenian madman, who thought that every vessel that entered the Piræus was his own!

An eloquent writer has compared the despotism of Austria to a noxious vapour, blighting every thing it lights upon; and the compa-

ri-son expresses exactly the withering influence which this government exerts over all its subjects. When it kills, it is by stifling. Rewards, the great spring of human action, are excluded from the scheme of its internal policy. Sometimes it is sparing even in punishment, from the fear of rousing into activity those minds which she would wish to reduce as much as possible into a state of vegetation. Madame de Staël says, there is no instance in Austria of any one being punished for doing too little, though occasionally one may be punished for doing too much. The Austrian Government would not permit the representation of Pellico's tragedy '*Eufemo de Messina*,' for no other reason than that it was likely to produce too strong an effect on the spectators. The Austrian Censor has a list of prohibited books as numerous as that of the Holy Office at Rome. Montesquieu is at this hour proscribed from the library at Vienna. The science of legislation is naturally considered as not only dangerous but useless, where the sovereign is the sole Legislator. Napoleon, who knew how to touch the sore parts of his opponents, when he took possession of Vienna in 1809, ordered a general pardon to be given to all the philosophers of the eighteenth century; and caused the Works of Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, and others, to be printed and circulated. All foreign Journals are prohibited in Austria. The different states of which it is composed have but one Journal, which merely delivers, at second hand, the oracular responses of the '*Austrian Observer*,' which is printed in the capital. Sometimes the newspaper of one province is published in another. In 1821, the Milan Gazette was published in Vienna. It is not wonderful, therefore, if the sciences, and particularly literature, owe little or nothing to this government. In the last century, the Court of Vienna gave the sounding title of *Cæsarian* poet, with a miserable salary, to Apostolo Tezio, to Metastasio, and others. In the present, even this scanty munificence has been retrenched. Government stopt the pension of the poet Parini, who died almost in poverty, and recalled the splendid rewards which Buonaparte had conferred on the living poet Monti. Europe has scarcely yet recovered from her astonishment at the violence of the Imperial anathema, fulminated at Laybach, in 1821, against the progress of knowledge.

And yet, while Austria persecutes literary men, she pretends to encourage the instruction of the people. In her regulations for public instruction, we find a pompous enumeration of lyceums, elementary schools of different kinds, &c. Every village is to be provided with a teacher of reading and writing — and every parent who does not send his family to school is to be subject to fine, &c. But the fact is, that nothing of all this is ever reduced to practice over the greater part of the kingdom. The inhabitants of all Hungary, Transylvania, Croatia, Bucornia, &c., amounting to about twelve millions, can neither read nor write. Austria has preserved one half of her provinces in all that primitive rudeness and barbarism in which she received them from the Turks, or the Gothic chiefs of the dark ages. There is perhaps no other instance where a government professing the Christian religion has thus laboured to render ignorance perpetual. The *astrictio glebæ* still exists in Hungary, in Gallicia, in Croatia, and other Austrian provinces; while Russia is every day emancipating her serfs, opening canals, erecting cities, and civilizing even the savages of the Crimea. The Russian Czars have done more for civilization in fifty years, than the Austrian Cæsars in three centuries.

It is usual with some writers to quote, as the model of a good administration, the government of Maria Theresa and Joseph the Second during last century in Lombardy. There is exaggeration enough in this; but there is some truth also. There is no doubt that those sovereigns did more good than any of their predecessors. But it is at least as certain, that what they did bore no proportion to what they *might have* done. When Napoleon created, armed, and enriched the kingdom of Italy, he proved experimentally, that the Austrian princes, who had preceded him, had done little more than sketch the outline of those improvements of which Lombardy was susceptible. We may add, that the evils which Italy now suffers from the Austrian government, but too effectually cancel in the eyes of Europe any merit that is to be found in the memory of the past.

Joseph II., that great contriver of laws and projects, wished to give a stimulus to industry and manufactures, and, with the usual narrow policy of theorists, adopted the system of restriction. But industry cannot flourish in a kingdom where there is no luxury, — no splendid court, — no rapid circulation nor facility of communication, — no sort of emulation or encouragement. In spite of all Joseph's restrictions, therefore, the project failed, and Austrian industry remained stationary. Napoleon, in less than ten years, formed manufactories all over France; while Austria, after thirty years of restriction, has never been able to produce any one kind of manufacture that can compete, not merely with the English or the French, but even with the manufactures of Saxony or Switzerland.

But of what importance is it to Austria that she possesses no great men — no civilization — no internal commerce — no flourishing manufactures — no national wealth — no thinking and reflecting subjects? These things may no doubt add to the sum of human happiness, and to the glory and strength of individual nations: but they require vigilance, knowledge, and activity on the part of the government; and Austria was not born to make such sacrifices for such objects. Her vocation is to command, and not to make happy; — and it is enough to deter her from wishing to rule well, that many labourers must be associated in the task, and power be partitioned among inferiors. She is one of those bad riders who would rather mount a hack than a hunter. Her highest ambition is the possession of a submissive standing army, securing the obedience of a submissive people; and for this she sacrifices revenue, population, and moral strength. All, accordingly, is silence and mystery over the extent of this vast empire. Publicity is banished from its courts and its public offices. There are no official statistics — no accounts of income and expenditure. But if the state of the finances is a secret, it is sufficiently well known that the revenue is small, and that the government is poor. The population is estimated at about 28 millions, and the annual receipts amount to little more than 12 millions sterling. About 3 millions must be added for the Italian provinces. Their population amounts to 4,000,000, so that their payments are about double those of the other subjects of Austria.

The massacre of St. Bartholomew is a common subject of declamation among political writers. It is certainly the most atrocious of those crimes that sully the annals of modern history; and yet the perfidy of the court of Catharine of Medici is not without a parallel. It is surprising how it could have escaped the notice of the defenders of liberty, that the court of Vienna has always conducted itself with a perfidy not

less refined than that of Catharine, against those provinces which, at different periods, have risen against her tyranny. The policy of Catharine was at least disclaimed by her successors. France herself disavowed the crime. But the Court of Vienna seems to have consecrated the Machiavellian maxim, that all means are lawful to destroy an enemy. Among the repeated acts of treachery of which this government has been guilty towards its internal enemies, we shall select one or two of the more striking and notorious, as proofs of the spirit by which it has been actuated from generation to generation. In 1619, Ferdinand II., after having defeated the Elector-Palatine and entered Prague, kept up, for three months, a system of pretended amity with the Bohemians, who had risen in arms to recover their antient rights. He then suddenly seized upon 40 of the principal insurgents, 33 of whom were put to death. Many others were banished, and many had their property confiscated. Those who admitted having taken part in the insurrection were allowed, in mockery, to retain their titles and honours, but were deprived of their property. Sixty years afterwards, the Emperor Leopold, desirous of a pretext for abolishing hereditary monarchy in Hungary, pretended to believe that many of the Hungarian nobles kept up a correspondence with Tekeli, who was then in arms for the independence of the kingdom. He immediately constituted a military tribunal, and filled Hungary with prisons, torture, and death. No fewer than thirty public executioners were attached to the commission. The tribunal sat in Epenes, and was called the Bloody Court of Epenes. If these atrocities are forgotten by Europe, they are deeply engraven in the memory of the Hungarians. This kind of treachery really seems hereditary in Austria. Even the purer reign of Joseph II. is not exempt from it. When in 1787 an insurrection broke out in Belgium, this Emperor exclaimed, that '*it was necessary to quench the flames of the rebellion with blood.*' Finding afterwards that the resistance was more obstinate than he had anticipated, he apparently grew milder, suppressed his resentment, dissembled, demanded conferences with the insurgents, and promised amnesties and oblivion; but no sooner had the storm blown over than he recalled his pardon, violated all his engagements, and commenced the system of persecution. During the last insurrection in Italy in 1821, the Austrian government followed out the same system of deceit and perfidy. The better to discover those concerned in the revolutionary movements, it pretended ignorance and apathy for more than six months, and then suddenly commenced a fearful system of prosecution, the procedure of which was enveloped in all the gloom and mystery of that of the Inquisition. And as if to put the finishing hand to its despotic insolence, it placed at the head of the judicial magistracy in Milan that Porta who had filled with grief and terror so many families in Lombardy.

How then, it may be asked, does Austria oppose her foreign enemies? We answer, 1. By mere physical strength. 2. By the supplies she receives through her alliance with England. 3. By the deceit and meanness which she makes use of in diplomacy. Before England, by its commercial wealth, acquired the ascendancy in Europe, the Austrian government existed principally by the sale of titles and investitures, and by supplies, sometimes obtained voluntarily, sometimes extorted by deceit or by force. Maximilian borrowed from every body, paid nobody, and yet was constantly in want of money. Charles V. refused to repay to Henry VIII. the money he had received in loan. Charles VI.

shared with his ambassadors the presents, which, by their means, he had received from the Court of Spain. Formerly, when the German Emperors were in want of money, they made a commercial journey to Italy, to sell investitures to the Marquises of Ferrara, or the Dukes of Milan, and titles to all the usurping chiefs of Italy. But when England became one of the principal states of Europe, they abandoned their profession of *Chevalier d'Industrie* for the safer trade of receiving the pay of England. And as long as England has continental enemies to hold in check, and is willing to pay in subsidies for the assistance of Austria, there is little doubt that Austria will neither alter her system of finance, nor her plan of depression and darkness. Maria Theresa herself, rather than civilize Transylvania, Croatia, &c., and thus increase the taxable capital of the empire, descended to sanction a plan of public begging in all the churches. On the contrary, should the supplies from England cease, Austria, if she wishes not to sink at once into a power of the *third* rank, being no longer able to sell the services of her armies to England, will be compelled to sell prosperity and moral dignity to her subjects.

Many of the Emperors of the House of Austria were given to the study of alchymy; but unfortunately they seem all to have been ignorant, that the surest means by which a government can make gold is by the furtherance of civilization. Despotism, however, must sometimes sacrifice something, even through self-love. The Sultan of Constantinople cannot at his pleasure cut off the Mufti's head, or drink wine — in public. He must *appear* sober if he wishes to be all-powerful. And thus, in Austria, the reigning monarchs have always avoided the scandal of abandoning the empire to the caprice of a favourite, of a confessor, or a mistress. This monarchy never had a Pere La Chaise or a Pompadour. The Jesuits, it is true, had for some time almost the sole management of the court under Ferdinand II.; but that was the general malady of the age. Louis XIV. had Richelieu for a favourite, and *he*, in turn, was influenced by the Capuchin Joseph. Externally, indeed, there is perhaps no court more economical, more modest, more regular, or apparently more popular than that of Austria. When the inhabitants of Vienna see their Emperor in a plain carriage, mingling with his subjects on the Prater, can they venture to insinuate any thing about the profusion of government? Can they demand a strict account of receipts and disbursements from a monarch who allows the Arch-dukes only 2,000*l.* a year, and pays Rossini at the rate of a guinea a concert? To all these inconveniences the Austrian Government submits, in order to escape the greater evil of a popular constitution.

The Emperor Frederic III. used to compare himself to a willow that bent with the blast, and rose again when the storm had passed over: and this comparison may be applied to the policy of all his house. Its power of resistance consists in its pliability; it has adopted as a rule of conduct, the maxim in fencing, '*La foiblesse fait la force.*' Vienna was once besieged by the Bohemians; once by the Turks; and has been twice taken in our own times. But the government always bent without breaking. Ferdinand, when unable to contend against the Turks in the field, yielded, and consented to pay them a tribute, which his successor Maximilian long submitted to continue. When Rodolph was unable to make head against the insurgent Bohemians, he also yielded, and pretended to recognise their rights, that he might gain time and strength to crush them the first opportunity. Such was also

the double policy she employed with the Transylvanian princes, and with her disaffected subjects in Hungary. Keeping in view the great principle of this state, namely, that power consists in the capacity of wielding an immense brute force — of recruiting her ranks from an inexhaustible mine of men, — we perceive how little she requires the aid of honour, of love of country, or commercial wealth for her support. The insult which a Turkish Pasha offered to the ambassador of Charles VI., the Count of Neuperg, by spitting in his face, Cromwell, Louis XIV., or Napoleon would have washed out with the blood of thousands; Charles VI. and his successors more prudently overlooked it. An insult which would have paralyzed the powers of the French monarchy, made no impression on the cynical endurance of Austria. The dignified Maria Theresa, to obtain the alliance of Spain and France, descended so far as to pay court to the singer Farinelli, and to keep up a correspondence with Madame de Pompadour, whom, in Vienna, she would have shut up in a penitentiary. The instant that Ferdinand III. suspected that Wallenstein was gaining too much popularity, he forgot that it was Wallenstein who had saved his throne, and caused him to be assassinated. After his death, however, he did not neglect to provide 3,000 masses for the good of his soul. Vienna was on the point of being taken by Kara Mustapha. Sobieski rushed forward to save the capital and the kingdom — *and Leopold disdained to embrace his deliverer!* During the next century, Maria Theresa usurped and partitioned a part of Poland, which had been instrumental in the preservation of her crown. At the peace of 1809, Austria abandoned to the vengeance of Napoleon the Tyrolese Hofer, who had headed the rising in the Tyrol against Napoleon. This hereditary and systematic ingratitude is only to be found in a government which feels that virtue of any kind is unnecessary to its existence. In 1800 she formed an alliance with Russia, and led into Italy the barbarous hordes of Siberia and Tartary to fight in the name of the Catholic religion. In 1821 she protected the Turks against the Greeks; and, at the congress of Verona in 1823, forbade the Greek envoys to come near the town, and ventured to plead the cause of the Mahometans in the presence of the descendants of the first champions of the Cross.

The result of the whole then is, that Austria does not aspire after glory — she is content with a tranquil longevity. She avoids all strong sensations, lively pleasures, and violent shocks, like those phlegmatic persons to whom mere existence is enjoyment. England enriches herself by commerce and conquest — but her riches and her commerce are liable to all the variations of accident. The war with her American dominions, and the Continental system of Napoleon, were two dangerous crises in her history; and already the state of her Indian provinces is a subject of anxiety. The conquests of France are rapid — but her reverses are not less so. Her glory is purchased at the price of comfort, peril, and anxiety. The history of the reign of Charles VIII., of Francis I., of Henry IV., of the wars of the League and of the Fronde, the Regency, the late Revolution, have all the startling effect of romance. And yet France, after all her triumphs and her toils, has lost the greater part of her colonies, and some portions of her proper territory. Warlike France, the terror of the nineteenth century, after twenty years of brilliant victory, is less extensive and less powerful at this moment than the supine, voluptuous France of the eighteenth. Austria, again, rises slowly, secretly, almost imperceptibly — she creeps

along the ground, undisturbed by the anxieties that are bred in higher regions, and suffering only from the occasional and temporary injuries which she receives in war. After having been the scorn and the mock of Europe for twenty years, she is at this moment stronger, more extensive, and more compact than before her defeats ! The anagram of Ferdinand III. A. E. I. O. U., which he interpreted, *Austria est imperare orbi universo*, is not very likely, we think, to be verified in our day ; yet it is not to be supposed that, because Austria does not openly aspire after the sceptre of the world, she has entirely renounced the hope or the wish of conquest. Austria is poor, but her ambition peeps out under her rags. If Charles V. had been less intolerant, his scheme of universal monarchy, perhaps, had been no chimera. The views of his successors were less extravagant, but they have all steadily contemplated the extension of their empire. Ferdinand II., about 1624, formed the project of taking possession of the shores of the Baltic, of acquiring a naval force, and closing the access to Germany against the Northern powers. Wallenstein was actually named admiral of the Baltic Sea. Charles VI. established a company in Ostend, with the view of forming a direct communication and trade with India, and attempted a naval station near Fiume. Every body knows the plans and projects of Joseph II. with regard to the navigation of the Scheldt. He had also the design of making himself master of the mouth of the Danube ; and was ready to abandon to Catharine the glory of taking Constantinople, provided he might share with her the Turkish empire, as he had done before in the case of Poland. That old established House is ever ready to embark in any copartnership of spoliation, and safe and ignoble plunder. Should the Turkish empire give way before the valour of the Greeks, we shall see Austria throw herself upon the spoil, and seize on Servia and Bosnia, which she has long coveted. If France first, and afterwards Prussia, had not defended the liberties of Bavaria, how soon would it have been absorbed in the abyss of Austria ? She wants nothing but money to make her formidable. In this view the possession of Italy is an incalculable advantage. If it exacts from her some vigilance, and causes her some anxiety, it furnishes her at the same time with the means of supporting a numerous army even in the time of peace. She draws from her Italian provinces more than a million sterling, free of all expense : and the other little kingdoms of Italy all pay her tribute. Naples, for four years, has had to maintain, at her own expense, 40,000 Austrian troops ; and Piedmont 15,000, for two years. The Italian princes pay to Austria an annual tribute for their provincial *pashaliks*, and Austria finds her strength in their weakness. We cannot understand how France and Russia can thus allow Austria to exercise this absolute dominion in the Italian peninsula, and treat the Italian princes as we do the Nabobs and Rajahs of India. And although our Cabinet supported Austria for twenty two years during the last war, it is scarcely our interest, one would think, that Austria, by the possession of Italy, should be enabled to dispense with our assistance. If she ever becomes rich, she will bid adieu to the Bank of England ; and England will lose in Austria the assistance of that arm which was ever ready to fight for any one who chose to pay.

Every government of Europe has its own catalogue of offences to answer for at the bar of humanity ; but Austria (with the exception perhaps of Turkey) is certainly the most guilty. This is no hasty

assertion; it is the result of history. From the time of Duke Albert to the present day, this House has been engaged in a continual war against liberty. There is no other instance in the history of the world of a struggle thus protracted for six centuries, and even now carried on with more ferocity than ever. She began her career by persecuting the inhabitants of some barren Swiss mountains; she destroyed the Cortes in Castile and Arragon; ravaged Flanders and Holland with fire and sword; extinguished the Italian republics in the 18th century, and wasted Germany for thirty years, scattering pestilence and death wherever she turned. She destroyed the seventy two Hanseatic cities that existed in Germany;—the constitution, the liberty, the prosperity, even the books and language of the Bohemians.* She deprived Hungary of her independence, her privileges, her rights, and even of the crown of St. Stephen—the Hungarian Palladium. She violated the Constitution which had been guaranteed to the Low Countries by the Maritime Powers, by the barrier treaty. But the list is endless. How many nations might demand from Austria a fearful reckoning for the prosperity, the independence, the liberty of which she has deprived them! And what benefits has she ever conferred on Europe in return? None—save the slender boon of arresting the conquests of the Turks, the Venetians, and the Poles.

No government, perhaps, ever encountered so many revolutions as Austria has done during the different periods of her political existence. Her history, like that of Turkey, is made up of wars and rebellions. Whatever the Holy Alliance may say, revolutions are the result of actual suffering. Happiness has no revolutionary tendencies; it is misery, slavery, and grief that make men discontented. Alsace, Lorraine, Franche Compté, and Brittany were tranquil under a government which bettered their condition. Our own Scotland has sacrificed the pride of independence for the solid advantages afforded by a union with England. Ireland, too, would be tranquil and resigned, were she admitted to the possession of equal advantages and equal rights. But what people can bear the leaden yoke of Austrian despotism? The Swiss supported a war of two centuries rather than resume it. The Arragonese, the Castilians, and Valentians rose against Charles V.; Flanders and Holland against Philip II.; and during the last century the Low Countries again rose against Joseph II. On the appearance of Gustavus Adolphus, the greater part of Germany took arms against the tyranny of Ferdinand II. From the days of John Huss, down to the assassination of Wallenstein, a period of a century and a half, Bohemia was constantly engaged in revolutionary struggles against the Austrian yoke. Hungary, animated by a still more generous aversion to slavery, from the reign of Ferdinand I. to that of Leopold II., has combated continually for the right of having its own kings, its own diets, and its own privileges. No nation can boast more generous champions of independence than Hungary, which enumerates among her worthiest, Botskai, Gabor, Verellini, Ragotski, and Tekeli. In 1790, the Hungarians, no unworthy descendants of such ancestors, exclaimed (and perhaps not for the last time) ‘We want no Austrian King!’ In 1746, the Genoese were compelled to rise against the

* After 1620, the Bohemian language sunk in fact into a dialect of the peasants, though some pretence is still made of preserving it from extinction, by the appointment of a professor of that language in some Universities.

oppression of the Austrian Government. Can any one who peruses this series of revolutions wonder that, in 1821, the Italians should also have attempted to shake off the yoke of Austria?

From this brief sketch of her fixed and unchangeable policy, we may gather, that Henry IV. would have conferred a blessing on Europe, if the hand of an assassin had not cut short his life, and his projects for leaguings Germany against the house of Austria: and we ought to feel grateful to our illustrious Chatham, who, to control her fatal predominance, created, during the last century, a rival kingdom in Prussia. Among those, indeed, who are aware of the facts to which we have hastily referred, there can assuredly be but one opinion as to the merits of a government which excommunicates knowledge, proscribes every liberal institution, and is the professed enemy of the amelioration of the human race. Writers of all countries have accordingly concurred of late in reprobating its meanness and cruelty, and have exerted themselves to place Austria under the ban of Europe, with far more justice than she herself, of old, used to place under the ban of the empire the electors by whom she was resisted. De Pradt, Lord Byron, Madame de Staël, Sismondi, are already at the head of this generous crusade; and the most eloquent writers of France and England follow in their train. Genius seems, indeed, instinctively to know its enemies; and if Austria hates knowledge, she may be assured that knowledge will, in due time, repay the obligation.

PRUSSIA.*

It reflects no little honour on the enlightened class of *our* politicians, that they seem every day more and more inclined to adopt the lofty faith of the ancients (a faith for which thousands among them sacrificed invaluable lives);—that the security and welfare, as well as the honour and glory, of a nation, depends mainly on its form of Government; and that all questions of national happiness, morality, and progressive improvement are *settled* at once by the endurance of an Absolute Monarchy. It is indeed, a proof of extreme narrowness of mind, to attach any value to the casual and momentary felicity which some nations have enjoyed under that form of government; or even to form a conclusion from thence as to the capacity which such governments possess of amelioration. What, on the whole, does the experience of the last thousand years establish so clearly, as the wretched and distracted condition of the nations which have depended for their happiness on the life or death of a minister or king?—which have undergone, every twenty or thirty years, the agitations of a true revolution, according as mere accident endowed their masters with spirit, benevolence, and energy, or cursed them with stupidity, ferocity, and weakness? Even in this lottery, too, how few have been the prizes! how perishable the prosperity they seemed to bring! With the exception of our own England, whose fortunes and honour depend not on the life of individuals, how

* Geschichte des Preussischen Staats, von Frieden Zu Hubertsburg, bis Zur Zweiten fariser Abkunft. Drei Bände. Frankfurt am Main, 1820.—Vol. xlii. page 460. August, 1825.

few have obtained any security against the utmost excesses of misgovernment? We need but open our eyes, indeed, to see these evils, inherent in absolute monarchies, exemplified in the present situation of most of the Continental nations. The favourable auspices which, only ten years ago, cheered the people of these great countries have already vanished; and the present times are by no means calculated to diffuse among impartial observers *cheerful* anticipations of their future condition.

The author of the work before us has brought down the history of Prussia from the peace of Hubertsburg to his own days, with as much impartiality as was possible in the times in which he wrote. Though he avows a particular admiration for the antient historians, and especially for Tacitus, and consequently affects the style of that renowned hater of despotism,—a style, indeed, admirably suited to the subject, it is obvious that the influence of the present times has pressed so heavily on him while describing recent events, that it would have been better if he had withheld this part at least of his work till a future period. Such, at least, we think, would have been the determination of Tacitus. Of the reign of Frederic II. he gives a more favourable, and, we think, a juster account than was common among a party of Prussian writers, among whom Mr. Arndt took the lead:—And he doubtless, in his dreary confinement at Bonn, may now frequently reflect on the liberality with which Frederic acknowledged the rights of opinion.

Frederic II., it is true, did not alter the system of absolute monarchy, to the administration of which he succeeded. In all essential points, the military department, the interior administration, and the legislative power, were concentrated in his hands; nor did he abolish those relics of the middle ages,—the prerogatives of one class of society over the other: but he made the most of this despotic system, by the astonishing powers of his mind; not only mitigating its ferocity, but working all the good that could be achieved by it in the life of one man. His great and redeeming qualities were, a steady love of *Justice*, by which he prevented the nobles from indulging their innate inclination to extend still farther privileges already too repugnant to reason and to right; *secondly*, his unexampled *Activity* in preventing abuses of delegated power,—abuses from which nothing but such activity could redeem such a system, and which are so apt to obstruct the designs of the best king when governed by his ministers; *thirdly*, the direction of that activity to the substantial welfare of his subjects, by the promotion of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce; *fourthly*, the laudable *Parsimony* which constantly insured to him the means of attaining his important ends; and, *lastly*, his fondness for *Literature*, his respect for its cultivators, and the unbounded and wholly unprecedented liberality with which he acknowledged the rights of *Opinion* and of the *Press*. This was, beyond all doubt, the most genuine indication of his truly great mind,—that, confident in the truth and justice of his proceedings, he felt that he would degrade himself by restraining the freedom of opinion. Patronizing, both by his writings and his actions, the rights of the human mind, he did more to promote the spirit of philosophical research, to encourage scientific and even political improvement, and to extinguish superstition and prejudice, than had been effected for centuries before his time. Some writers have reproached him with partiality for French, and aversion to German literature; but

great living names in German literature have vindicated him from that reproach.* In those days, the German works of taste were framed on the model of *Gottsched*; and it would be hard to insist that a genius like that of Frederic II. should be pleased with such productions. Others have upbraided him with the little regard he bestowed on the clergy. In this he may, perhaps, have gone too far; but many great men have been of opinion, that too great deference to that order must ever be pernicious. The most unreasonable reproach of all, was that which was clamorously urged against his system, after the battle of Jena, by those factious and servile writers, who, unwilling to trace the evil to its true source, found it easier to calumniate the memory of the great King, than to denounce the vices of their own party: They said that *the spirit* of his government was vicious; that when the extraordinary energy and skill which had given life and unnatural power to that system had ceased to enlighten the cabinet of his successors, its vicious spirit survived, its clinging vices spread alike over the civil and military departments of the administration, and speedily wrought their effects in the temporary ruin of the monarchy. These vague and unintelligible calumnies, however, continued but for a short time. They were silenced by more enlightened and impartial spirits, and are only now and then revived in some remote aristocratical papers.

It is worthy of remark, that of all the absolute monarchs on the Continent, excepting Henry the Fourth of France, none ever acquired the love of his people to so great a degree as Frederic; and he gained it, not by the gift of a constitution (for there was none), but by his personal merits; thus exposing himself to the same charge brought against the hero of France, — that he neglected to secure the happiness of his people against the vices or incapacity of his successors.

The effects of this accordingly were but too soon apparent. After the death of Frederic the Second, his system of rule was reversed. A policy, vacillating, and without principle in its foreign relations, and in its internal concerns obeying the mere impulse of private passions, very soon threw the kingdom into the most horrible confusion. It was not by the vices of Frederic's system, — it was by the absence of all the virtues by which that monarch rendered harmless the evils of despotism, and gave scope to enterprise and industry, — it was by vices, which, supplanting these virtues, carried to their utmost extent the inherent propensities of despotism to produce national calamity, that the decay of his kingdom was occasioned. The government of Frederic William the Second exhibits, indeed, a signal instance of the sudden transitions incident to absolute monarchies, from great prosperity and splendour to disgrace and misery. This monarch, addicted to despotism and debauchery, soon became wholly unacquainted with the government: profligate mistresses governing the King; worthless ministers caballing and intriguing against each other; crowds of dependants on mistresses and ministers holding the public offices to sale! — These were the rulers of the state! — The public treasury, which had been replenished by the sedulous economy of Frederic, was plundered in a few years; the spirit of selfishness and corruption pervaded all departments; the aspiring churchman again raised his head, and, to indemnify himself for the subordination in which he had been kept by the former King, dared to impose an intolerable oppression of

* See Schloffer; Geschichte de 18ten Jahrh. 1 Theil.

conscience. At length visionaries, exorcists, conjurers of spirits, found a place at the court, and entitled it to the description applied, if we rightly remember, by Cardinal de Retz, to that of a French king, — ‘At this court reigned all vices by which monarchies are ruined — dissipation, voluptuousness, gaming, and magical divination.’

After the death of Frederic William II., the more obvious scandals were indeed removed. The Countess of Lichtenau was sent away, and part of the creatures of the system discharged; but the fundamental disorders, which had thriven like weeds in the absence of a constitution, and of all pretensions to public virtue, still flourished as before. The corruption of the aristocracy, in particular, hastened to its crisis; and when the declining monarchy ventured to grapple with the gigantic power of Napoleon, in the field of Jena, it was found even more impotent than that of Austria in the battles of Ulm and Austerlitz. The measureless infamy of the Prussian generals in that war is now well known; but the profligacy of the aristocracy also, in every other department, was exposed in a multitude of publications, which, though deemed unpatriotic by more recent writers, have nevertheless been very serviceable, not only to history and to posterity, but also to contemporary minds, as they have co-operated in fully demonstrating the utter rottenness of the pillars of the state.*

Prussia was now placed in a situation doubtless the most desperate to which a state can be reduced. To dependence and oppression from without were superadded internal infirmities, which seemed incurable, and the vigilance of a suspicious enemy, armed with overwhelming power.

In this situation of affairs, the minister Von Stein seized the helm of the state. He was undoubtedly one of the greatest ministers of modern times, and the immortal merit of his services to Prussia will, though perhaps not now, because his system has already vanished, but certainly in future times, be fully appreciated. Disdaining the aristocracy which had ruined the state, he applied to *the nation* for its relief. The two grand and intimately connected objects of his administration were to deliver his country from foreign oppression, and to create a liberal constitution. He formed a plan for rousing it to a sense of its dignity, by freeing it from the degrading domination of the aristocracy, — for inspiring it with national feelings and patriotism, by admitting it to a share in the public councils, leaving to each community the management of its own concerns; and for creating, by these means, a mental power in the whole body of the people, which, on a proper occasion, whenever fate should afford it, might be able to break her fetters and vanquish the oppressor. How far and how long the King concurred in a system tending thus to regenerate the nation, and to create a free constitution, we refrain from defining, because the times that ensued have decided the question. We shall confine ourselves to a general survey of the most important effects of this system, introduced either by Stein himself, or by the ministry which he formed, and which acted on his principles for some time after his removal.

One of his first efforts was directed to the emancipation of a considerable part of the nation from villenage. During the period from 1807 to 1811, various decrees were passed for fixing the duties and

* The most remarkable in this respect were the writings of Kölln, called *Feuerbrände*.

rights of the new freeholders, and for indemnifying their former masters.*

In the year 1807, a law was passed which abolished an absurd and pernicious distinction between the estates of nobles and those of peasants. Formerly, the farms of a nobleman could not be purchased by a commoner; those of a commoner might, in most cases, be transferred to a noble. This law abrogated the distinction, and removed the impediments to a free disposition of property.

The property of the nobles was exempt from the land tax; the abolition of this exemption was gradually prepared and executed, in spite of opposition from the nobility, in the year 1810.

One of the most important decrees related to the municipal institution; it was framed on the model of the English municipal law; and was introduced at once throughout the whole kingdom. Von Stein rightly regarded this institution as tending to prepare the public spirit for the representative system. Connected with it was the abolition of guilds, and of all restraints and privileges by which trades and manufactures had been hitherto fettered.

The Prussian minister also directed his views to the military department. In 1808 and 1809, the humiliating exclusion of commoners from the rank of officer was removed, and every soldier was enabled to attain any rank in the army. At the same time the barbarous punishment of military flogging was abolished. As this law was designed to excite the sentiment of military honour in the commoners, so the great establishments in this department were calculated to create a national military. The plan was excellent. To avoid exciting the suspicions of a watchful enemy, or violating a hard condition of the peace, which allowed only a small force to be kept on foot, Von Stein directed fresh masses of the national youth to be successively levied and trained to arms for several years, the former levies being dismissed to their homes. Care was taken to inspire every levy with proper feelings. Even the great measure of an universal national armament, executed at a later period, and attended with such astonishing success, was then prepared by Von Stein, in conjunction with some military men, particularly *Scharnhorst*.

The system of Von Stein tended to develop the moral force of the nation, by the energy inherent in all liberal institutions. The execution of this plan, therefore, required everywhere men of talent and of elevated minds. Knowing that such men are not generally to be found in the common track of promotion, and under the cold formalities of administration, Stein himself took pains to seek them. Men of this character, who understood the tendency of his system, and co-operated with enthusiasm in his labours, were employed in the most important parts of every department, especially those of military affairs and of public instruction. Convinced of the powerful influence which mental culture must have on the promotion of such designs, he paid great attention to that object. By him, and by his party, the Universities of Berlin and Breslau, and, at a later period, that of Bonn, were established; the whole scheme of education and of public instruction was directed to the development of national feelings; and men, dis-

* Villanage, that cruel outrage on the primary rights of man, still subsists over a great part of Russia; and the Autocrat of those serfs now gives laws to the Continent!

tinguished not only by intellectual faculties and scientific attainments, but also by liberal and patriotic sentiments, took the lead in all literary institutions.

Meanwhile, Stein descried with alarm the germs of an internal opposition, and the rising suspicions of Napoleon. In order, therefore, to settle his plan on a sure basis, independent of his own existence and ministry, he had recourse to one of those great measures, uncontrollable by ordinary considerations, and often the sole refuge of an oppressed nation. He founded the secret association, celebrated under the name of the *Tugendbund*. It is not our present intention to describe that society; we would merely remark, that it was composed of the most eminent men of all classes; that its aim was to familiarize the nation with the idea of deliverance from her oppressors, and to awaken all her powers for that purpose; but, particularly to rouse the national Youth, and to infuse into them that lofty patriotism, and fixed contempt of death, on which was founded the freedom of the antients. The activity of these men extended far and wide; some of them, such as Generals Scharnhorst and Grollmann, were intent on nationalizing the soldiery; others, like Fichte, Schleirmacher, &c. influenced the academic youth by their writings and animating lectures; others again, like Jahn, Arndt, &c., not only wrote, but travelled for the purpose of maintaining the association in different places. The former was especially engaged in conducting the warlike exercises of the youth.

By the combination of all these means, the kingdom was soon animated with a spirit unexampled, perhaps, in any modern community. Instead of a corrupt aristocracy, the nation itself rose up in the full energy of every faculty that can render the sense of oppression bitter, and the purpose of redress irresistible. Even in the war of Napoleon with Austria in 1809, the direction which the national spirit had received was clearly manifested, nor could it but with difficulty be restrained from breaking forth. The operations of Schill are well remembered.

At this time, Von Stein was no longer at his post; in 1808 he was persecuted and outlawed at the instance of Napoleon, and compelled to seek safety in flight. Before his departure, however, he addressed to all the high officers in the kingdom a circular letter, in which he developed the leading features of his system, as far as this was then possible or safe. That address incontestably shows that he aimed at a free political constitution, at the head of which a national representation should be entitled, not only to be consulted, but to vote in all acts of legislation, and should be formed by the equal exercise of their political rights by all citizens, whether possessing one or one hundred acres of ground, whether engaged in trade, or in the cultivation of letters. Such are almost his own words; but this work he could not complete.

Though Von Stein was driven from his post, yet he had given a degree of stability to his system by a ministry formed in his spirit. His successor also, the prime minister, Count and afterwards Prince Hardenberg, adhered to it for some time, but by no means with the energy and firmness of its author; and at last he renounced it entirely. Generally speaking, however, this system, of which the substance was deeply rooted in the nation, was maintained until 1815, and did not entirely disappear until 1818.

In the year 1813, the astonishing results prepared by the activity

of Stein, announced a regenerated people. The vast scheme of universal armament (*landwehr*), formed by Scharnhorst, Arndt, and others, and rapidly executed by the whole nation; the spontaneous contributions supplied to the impoverished state by all classes; the enthusiasm with which every order and condition answered the call to arms; the unequalled courage of the soldiery in general, but especially of the regiments of the *Landwehr*, charging hostile batteries with the bayonet; the heroism of the volunteer corps, composed mostly of highly educated youths, who, like Spartans, regarded their country as every thing, and danger and death as nothing, and whose exploits are immortalized among the Germans by the songs of *Theodor Körner*: these are phenomena almost unexampled in modern history. As the Allied armies advanced to victory, Von Stein was recalled to superintend the administration of the newly conquered countries. The re-appearance of this minister excited among the Prussians the universal hope of seeing him reinstated in his former place; but this hope was not to be realized.

Let us now cast a glance on Germany, properly so called. During the protectorate of Napoleon, a general opinion, long existing in its elements, had established itself, which may be consistently termed the *national opinion* of the Germans. It was the result, not only of recent events, but of the whole history of this people, clearly conceived by the enlightened classes, and deeply, though more vaguely, impressed on the feelings of the lower orders. The good effects of Napoleon's protectorate, particularly the abolition of the feudal oppressions, and the prerogatives and power of the clergy, were by no means undervalued; but in the concentration of all power in the persons of their respective princes, the people discerned the continued evils of a despotic government, rendered still more debasing by the dependence of those governments on a foreign conqueror. The body of the people, therefore, participated everywhere in the enthusiasm of the Prussians; and their princes, in many cases, gave way to the impulse. After they had shaken off the yoke, the national opinion evinced itself in favour of a free constitution with equal clearness, unanimity, and force. We must be indulged in saying a word or two more on this subject, particularly as some English publications have given currency to very erroneous impressions with regard to it. In one popular work, for example, it has been stated that the Germans looked almost exclusively to the English *Parliament*; but that 'the *trial by Jury* does not enjoy such great favour in the estimation of speculative men in Germany, as most English institutions do.' It is added, not less erroneously, that '*an unlicensed press* had not been deemed so necessary in Germany, on account of the extreme liberality with which the Censorship was administered; besides, a very large proportion of the literary men of Germany reside in and are members of the Universities, whose privileges serve as a protection against any vexatious interference of the police.' What is the true condition of these privileges, and this liberality, we shall soon see; at present we shall only observe, that the Germans would have been the weakest of men if they had really held the opinions here imputed to them. But the contrary is the fact. The national opinion on a free constitution, demanded *Representative assemblies*, invested with true legislative power, the judicial institution of *Jury-Trial*, independent of the government, and the freedom of *the Press*. Such was the importance attached to each of

these demands, that it was generally deemed impossible to establish political liberty without the union of those three institutions. These sentiments were constantly and uniformly declared through all the organs of public opinion, in the learned discussions of national writers, in the numerous popular journals, and in the representative assemblies of the different states, as soon as they were introduced.* To these necessary bases of a free constitution, we may add two other objects, on which the general opinion was pronounced with almost equal unanimity,—one, the establishment of complete freedom of Trade, and of liberty of internal commerce, unburthened with local tolls and taxations,—the other, a great central or federal Representation, uniting the different German communities into one vast political body, and thus securing the independence of the whole nation.

The Prussian government, still, to some extent, in the hands of the liberal party, fully acquiesced in these demands. A Commission was appointed to make a Report on Jury-Trial; and this Report, printed at Berlin in 1818, demonstrates, by most solid and convincing arguments, the necessity for introducing this institution. The establishment of the Representative system, and of the liberty of the Press, was also promised; and meanwhile, the censorship was exercised with great liberality and forbearance. Prussia at that time enjoyed the unbounded confidence of all the different tribes composing the German nation. Not only her glorious exploits, but the character of her administration, the lustre of her recent literature, and the attention so nobly bestowed on public instruction, obtained full credit for the repeated declarations of her statesmen, that the political existence of this state was grounded in the strength of intellectual power and of liberal ideas, and placed her, in the estimation of all Germany, foremost in the rank of those nations who had most deeply imbibed and most powerfully directed the spirit of the age.

Occupying this eminent station, Prussia appeared avowedly as the advocate of popular interests in the Congress of Vienna, as appears from the Reports of *Klüber*. That Congress united her still more closely to the majority of the German nation, because its result disappointed both her and the nation. Prussia obtained no satisfaction respecting her territorial demands; and the German people had to endure the frustration of their hopes for the formation of a central institution, which should unite the different states into one political body. The national party, therefore, (not the Princes,) desired the protectorate of Prussia, at that time the champion of liberal ideas. And it is an undoubted fact, that on the strength of this popularity, and of the increasing dissensions in the Congress, she meditated at that time the establishment of a great national power in Germany, and

* The most eminent jurists and philosophers of Germany, Thiebaut, Buckholz, Hazzi, *Zacchariæ*, *Mittermaier*, *Graevell*, Welker, Rotteck, *Krug*, and many others, have distinctly developed these constitutional ideas. All enlightened statesmen coincided in the same sentiments, expressed with the full ardour of public interest, in numerous popular journals, as *Nemesis*, *Der Patriot*, *Das Oppositionsblatt*, *Der Rheinische*, *Mercur*, *Die Neckarzeitung*, *Der Reichsanzeiger*, and in a multitude of pamphlets. Even in the latest times, the Chamber of Commons in Bavaria made an attempt,—feeble and fruitless indeed, since the Austrian principles have prevailed, but clearly manifesting the national wishes, now unhappily suppressed,—for the introduction of Trial by Jury.

might in all probability have succeeded in that bold design. But the re-appearance of Napoleon suddenly changed the scene. The Congress of Vienna was dissolved ; — that Congress, assembled at the most critical epoch in modern history, to satisfy the just demands of nations, separated, after having shamefully tampered with those just demands !

On the termination of the war, the Austrian Cabinet began clearly to develop its system of re-action. Indications of that system had already been disclosed in the base and unworthy treatment of the Tyrol, and of Lombardy, in the engagement extorted from the King of Naples, not to introduce a representative constitution into his states ; and in the proposals made by the Austrian ministers in the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. The liberal party in Prussia now gradually lost its influence ; the hopes which had been so long held out, of a representative assembly, and of the concomitant institutions, were not fulfilled. On the other hand, the opposition which the aristocracy had long ago formed against the principles of Von Stein daily gained ground, under the influence of Austria, and with the support of the barbarians on the eastern frontier of Prussia. The most distinguished individual of the national party, who, with great military talents, united profound political views, and an astonishing energy of mind, General Scharnhorst, lay buried on the field of battle.

But the force of public opinion had not been ineffectual in Germany. In most of the states the Censorship had been actually abolished, and the unlicensed press introduced ; legislative assemblies, much restricted indeed in their privileges, but not destitute of utility, had been established ; and the national opinion, daily diffusing itself through a multitude of liberal journals, afforded just expectations of progressive improvement. In these circumstances, Austria, who had been associating herself with the Jesuits, the Turks, and the aristocracy of every kind, and had attached the Russian Court to her interests, deemed it seasonable to strike a decisive blow. On an occasion which in any other country would have merely given rise to a criminal process, she raised the cry of *revolution* in Germany. At this cry, all the aristocratical rubbish that had sunk into obscurity, and every modern fungus that had sprouted under the protectorship of Napoleon, collected around *Metternich* and *Gentz*. We have elsewhere exposed this dark scheme of Austria *, and have shown, that the dearest interests of the German nation were attacked, or rather mortally wounded, by the decrees of Carlsbad in 1819, through which the liberty of the press was suspended, and liberal journals abolished ; the privileges of the legislative chambers essentially diminished ; the Universities subjected to the police, and a particular state-inquisition established at *Mentz*, to watch over the proceedings of the liberal party. To the honour of the German princes, it should be recorded, that the greater part of them consented to these decrees with great reluctance, overawed by the domineering influence of Metternich ; and indeed some, as the kings of Bavaria and Wirtemberg, ventured substantially to disregard them.

But what was the conduct of Prussia on occasion of this Austrian manifesto of despotism ? It is plain, that Austria could never have carried her purposes into effect if Prussia had acted on the principles of Stein, or even on those of the illustrious Frederic. The high duty of the Prussian Government, after the restoration of the state, de-

* See the sketch of Austria, No. 80. of the Edin. Review ; art. 2d.

manded, in the opinion of the Prussian and German people, that she should, on the one hand, progressively develop the safe, tried, and liberal system of Stein in great national institutions; and on the other hand, should endeavour to improve the wretched military position to which she had been condemned by the Congress of Vienna. This second object could not be otherwise obtained than by keeping pace with the spirit of the age, and promoting the general interests of the German nations, who were now universally satisfied that their independence could only be secured, and the regeneration of their common country effected, by a powerful and liberal protectorship, for which they were now willing to look in the intelligence and experience of Prussia. That State, however, *suddenly changed her policy* — shrunk back from the high vocation wherewith she had been called — and in a short time afforded another example of sudden transition from glory to shame, — a transition not less humiliating than that which ensued on the death of Frederic.

The liberal party was at last obliged to yield to the influence of Austria and Russia; and Prince Hardenberg abandoned himself as implicitly to the triumphant aristocratical party, as he had before appeared to do to the liberal party. The government of Prussia magnanimously foreswore that antient jealousy of Austria which Frederic the Second had proclaimed as the vital principle of the State, closed its eyes resolutely against all views of political improvement, and found, it would appear, a more suitable occupation in persecuting the assertors of liberal principles, in realizing the Austrian theory of *Obscuration*, and in serving the degrading office of whipper-in to the Holy Alliance, not only in its own states, but in all the other provinces of Germany. We will prove this immediately to be no exaggeration, by a slight view of the manner in which the decrees of Carlsbad were executed in Prussia. In the meantime, we cannot but stop to remark, that no one perhaps of the many disgusting scenes which abound in modern story will so deeply affect the mind of the historian as the intellectual degradation of this aspiring nation. No other of the states of the Continent has tarnished so fair a fame, has disappointed such lofty expectations, or sustained so vast a loss of credit and confidence, by yielding to the Austrian system.

The most distinguished men, who had acted on the principles of Von Stein, now lost either their offices or their influence. The most active, especially among the literati, were subjected to persecution on the pretext of *revolutionary opinions*. (The principles of these men were indeed revolutionary in the eyes of the aristocracy.) The mode, the object, every thing in this inquisition is disgusting. The old tribunals were suspended, and special commissions appointed. These commissioners arrested their victims by surprise, and mostly in the night-time; seized their papers, and placed their persons in close custody. In the new provinces an itinerant commission was instituted for this purpose, under one *Pape*, an obscure lawyer of Westphalia, selected for his jealous and venal disposition. In the provinces formerly belonging to France, the proceedings were at first conducted according to the existing laws; but when it was found that the prisoners would be acquitted by the juries, which still subsisted in those provinces, the institution itself was suspended by a Cabinet order, concerning these *demagogical inquests*, as they were called; upon which one of those victims, *Mühlentz* of Cologne, a courageous and high-minded man,

declared that thenceforward he should consider himself as arbitrarily outlawed, and that he would answer no more questions. After making this declaration, he was conducted to a dungeon at Berlin. Indeed these commissions placed every subject at the absolute disposal of the government; all protecting laws and forms were suspended; the accused, without any specific charge, were subjected to a secret examination, and exposed to every kind of mental torture, incident to that horrible mode of procedure. The objects of those examinations were principally mere *opinions*; and an arbitrary discretion of the most revolting nature was exercised in the interpretation of papers; in the perversion of sentiments into crimes; and if actions were the object, those actions had been provoked by the government itself in former times. Even the act of concurring in the formation and promotion of the *Tugendbund* was not exempt from those examinations.

They were directed by the Supreme State Inquisition of Mentz; and by an expedient which, in this respect also, withdrew the accused from their competent judges, the Court of Breslau was authorized to pronounce the decision. The members of this Court had previously been changed, according to the views of the Government; and of course were always ready to find the accused guilty. In most cases, however, no sentence whatever was pronounced; the accused remained under arrest; or, if set at liberty, he was dismissed from office, and exposed at every instant to new persecutions. Two of the most distinguished of these victims were the professors *Jahn* and *Arndt*. Both had devoted the vigour of their lives to the great object of the Prussian patriots, the deliverance of their country; Arndt, by his political connexions, his writings, and his projects, had acquired the confidence and friendship of Scharnhorst, and was highly esteemed by Von Stein. Jahn had served the good cause by his astonishing activity in the formation of the *Tugendbund*. Endowed with transcendant personal qualities, he formed the main connecting link of that association. On the first dawn of good fortune, he marched into the field with a corps of youths whom he had formed by a peculiar system of gymnastic exercises. No man in Prussia had such a predominant influence over the national youth, or so great a share of popularity, as Jahn. On the termination of the war, Arndt had been appointed to a Professorship at the University of Bonn, *as a reward (to use the words of Prince Hardenberg) for his actions and writings*. Jahn, about the same time, resumed his system of gymnastic exercises for youth. In the year 1819, both these men became the objects of a signal persecution. Those very writings and actions, which Prince Hardenberg had pronounced worthy of reward, were subjected to a severe inquisition; while this very Prince Hardenberg was still living, and directing the administration; and the Professor for several years endured the greatest of all tortures to a man of genius — the examination of an ignorant and brutal inquisitor, the above-mentioned Pape. On him sentence was never pronounced. Jahn's cause was brought before the Court of Berlin, to save appearances, as he enjoyed the high respect of the nation. That Court acquitted him; but the acquittal only exasperated the ruling faction, and he was instantly imprisoned anew in the fortress of Colberg! A deep melancholy was the consequence of his separation from his wife and children; these died one by one, in sorrow and indigence. By a second sentence of a Court of Justice, he has lately been a second time acquitted. Unsatisfied by these monstrous inquisitions in the States of Prussia, in

which the Government was at once accuser, judge, and witness, through the deposition of hired spies, the aristocratic faction also successfully employed its influence to compel the liberal Duke of Weimar either to dismiss, or to sanction an inquisition against the celebrated professors, Fries, Ohen, Luden, and others.

This arbitrary conduct thenceforward characterized all the measures of the government. The censorship was exercised with the utmost rigour: all books published in foreign countries, if not written conformably to the political creed of the prevailing faction, that is, according to the Austrian doctrine of blind obedience, were prohibited, as in Austria. Even in cases where the censorship had been less severe, authors were subsequently persecuted for their publications. The case of this kind, which caused the greatest sensation in Germany, was that of Professor Goerres in the year 1820. He demonstrated, in a political pamphlet, that the Government of Prussia had not fulfilled its promise of giving a constitution, and of making no alteration in the condition of the Rhenish provinces. For this assertion, he was ordered to be arrested: he escaped, however, and fled to France. From thence he transmitted an offer and request to be tried before competent judges, but this was flatly rejected.

The Universities were subjected to the inspection of Commissaries of the Police, and divested of most of their privileges. Thus, the scientific institutions of Prussia, which had constituted her greatest glory, were openly disgraced. Those commissaries, richly paid, hardened in ignorance, and impelled by the spirit of persecution which actuated their masters, scrutinized alike the lectures and the lives of the professors. Every deviation from the doctrine of absolute monarchy, every allusion to the disasters of the time, involved the penalty of immediate expulsion; a letter of Professor de Wette subjected him to that penalty. Private lists were kept, in which the political opinions of the professors at all the Universities and Gymnasias were entered. The method and the objects of instruction were alike regulated, on a particular political plan, conformably to the designs of the ruling faction. How utterly were the nurseries of science, and its cultivators, degraded from the eminent situation in which they had been placed by Frederic the Second, and by the ministry of Von Stein! Sunk from their natural elevation above the transient views of changeable politics, they were enthralled to the servile doctrines of absolute sovereignty, and exposed at every moment to the insults of the police. In this thralldom the torch of truth fell from the hands that held it, at the time when its light was most wanted; the spirit of inquiry was subdued, and venal flatterers alone wrote on the most sacred interests of society; while truth was reduced to the sad alternative of silence or martyrdom.

The external administration, also, which had been free and open under the ministry of Von Stein, now assumed that sinister character of mystery and distrust which always marks a despotical government. An extensive secret police was organized; spies were hired by the month to communicate reports; the inviolability of the post-office was no longer respected; the local authorities were incessantly receiving secret orders and commissions; and the police,—in all times and places dangerously arranged in the states of the Continent,—now seemed, in Prussia, to have engrossed the whole administration and jurisdiction.

If it be asked, what truly useful measure for promoting internal

prosperity has been effected during this period? we have scarcely any reply to make. A new liturgy, to be sure, has been introduced, which has occasioned interminable quarrels, and almost a schism, among the clerical orders; the form of administration has been modelled and remodelled, to no beneficial purpose; a new system of taxation has been organized, which proves extremely burthensome, but which finds its excuse in the ruinous state of the finances. The line of custom-houses, however, which now surrounds the Prussian States has not even this apology — any more than the high tariff of duties, which almost totally excludes commerce of every kind with the other German States. Those States, always disposed to retaliate, and not averse to such a financial speculation, have successively imitated this exclusive system; and thus the great Germanic nation now exhibits to foreigners the ridiculous picture of a number of friendly states, each barricadoed like a fortress by its own government, though the productive classes in all of them cannot exist without a perfectly free, mutual intercourse. The inevitable consequences of this system have at last become abundantly manifest; trade has been reduced to the brink of ruin; corn has sunk to one-third of its former value, and landed property still lower. The agricultural classes, weighed down by taxes, are everywhere deeply depressed, in many places languishing in utter wretchedness; and the wish of emigrating to America has never been so general among them as at present. Most of the governments are aware, though too late, of the destructive effects of their system. After fruitless conferences on the subject at Darmstadt, which were frustrated by Austria, the governments of Nassau, Darmstadt, Baden, Wurtemberg, and Bavaria are now again consulting at Stuttgard and Mentz, for the relief of agriculture and commerce. Prussia alone persists in this destructive system.

If it be asked, what has been done during this period for augmenting the external force of the nation in relation to other states, and for enhancing her influence in the political system? we must answer — Nothing. Drawn into the dark path of the Holy Alliance, she has not even participated in the profit derived by Russia and Austria from that perfidious and tyrannical system. Russia has extended her influence on the Continent; Austria has subjected Italy and Germany to her sway; but Prussia, while outflanked by both those powers, has been contented with the disgusting office of taking the lead in the persecution of liberal ideas, in the oppression of science and literature, and in the execution of the despotic measures planned by her superiors. And what has she gained? Russia rules over hordes of barbarians; Austria over a mass of people studiously kept for centuries in a state of profound ignorance. Neither of those despotisms, therefore, inflicts any vital injury on itself by its despotic measures. But the political strength of Prussia necessarily rests on the affection and respect of an *enlightened* people; and of that support she has deprived herself. And yet, with an incredible infatuation, she continues to perform her degrading part. In the year 1823, new and aggravated inquisitions were organized. *Koepenick*, an old castle near Berlin, was transformed into a state-prison, to which numbers of persecuted persons were conducted from all parts of the empire. In the same spirit of subserviency she cheerfully acquiesced in the new proposals, or rather *orders*, issued by Austria in the Diet at Frankfort, on the 24th August 1824. The object of those proposals was the renewal and aggravation of the decrees of Carlsbad in 1819. The liberty of the press was now totally abolished;

a censorship was regulated in all the States, and placed under the direct control of Austria; the universities were still farther degraded; the privileges of the representative assemblies abolished, and new inquisitions ordained. These, like the former measures of terror, were abhorred by the people, and generally by the Princes of Germany; but those Princes were unable to resist the joint influence of Austria and Russia. It was now that the government of Prussia assumed, as her favourite vocation, the supreme direction of the persecutions throughout Germany. Lists of proscription were addressed by her to the different governments, accompanied with a demand to deliver up certain individuals, their subjects, to be conducted to Koepenick. Several persons of unblemished respectability at Darmstadt were accordingly transported to that prison. Prussian emissaries were sent to the southern states of Germany to manage the inquisitions, and were particularly active at Wirtemberg, where they filled the fortress of *Hohenasperg* with their victims. This mania of persecution was carried so far as even to cause the imprisonment of literary travellers; a remarkable instance of which came to light in the case of Professor *Coussin*.

Though these persecutions, like those of 1819, proceeded in general from the same principle, that of destroying the liberal system, yet these expedients of tyranny seem at last to have produced their natural reaction. While numerous individuals have been imprisoned in consequence of the denunciations of wretches in the pay of the police, and while the government is obliged to release those who defy the depositions of these hirelings, with the humiliating acknowledgment of their innocence (as was the case with Mr. Coussin), there have been momentous indications among the military, in consequence of which the Commandant of Erfurt and some other officers have been shot. It would, indeed, be amazing if this system could be carried on, without encountering an increased resistance among the many distinguished men who had imbibed a higher conception of the destiny of their country from the ministry of Stein.

It was at this inauspicious period, that the establishment of a representative chamber, promised in 1813, was at last carried into execution. We have already adverted to the notions of Von Stein on this subject. The notions of the German people were the same; and the representative systems formed in Wirtemberg, Bavaria, Darmstadt, Weimar, Baden, &c. had been modelled in some degree upon this idea. But it was the intention of Austria to reduce these bodies to the character of those in her own states (*Landstaende*): and as early as 1819, these German representative systems were generally detached from all that could give them use or energy; the liberty of the press being extinguished, the liberal journals annihilated, liberal ideas persecuted, and liberal men imprisoned. One of the Austrian decrees of August 1824 formally demands, that the publicity and freedom of discussion in these German assemblies should be abolished, and the institutions themselves assimilated to the Austrian *Landstaende*. It was to be supposed, that, in these circumstances, the Prussian Government, which had so implicitly conformed to the wishes of Austria, would also take from that country the model of this institution; and so in substance it has. Provincial states are established in every province, and from these a central body is selected at Berlin. The composition of this representative system, its attributes, its destiny,—all possess the character, not of a national institution, but of a delusion, in a despotic government. These

assemblies most obsequiously deliver their respectful *opinion* on whatever is proposed to them, and that is all: they have no shadow of a true legislative function.

We have no longer leisure to go into any of the details of this mockery of a free constitution — though the subject is every day acquiring a more general interest. The art of organizing Representative assemblies without any particle of Political power, and of converting the forms of Legislative deliberation into engines for the suppression of free inquiry, is every hour becoming of more importance to the European tyrannies: — and there are three especial observances, by the combination of which, this great problem may be satisfactorily solved; — *first*, to limit the elective franchise to such classes or descriptions of persons as are most likely to be subservient to the possessors of power; — *second*, to make the persons first elected representatives only for small local districts, and to have the general or national representation appointed, neither *by* the body of electors, nor *from* their number, but out of the members of the provincial or primary assemblies, and by the vote of their majorities; — and, *thirdly*, to make all safe, by not intrusting even to this double distilled body any real legislative power; but, by taking from it the right of withholding supplies, to reduce its functions, even in appearance, to the right of giving advice, and in reality to that of giving form and publicity to the will of the executive. All these conditions, we understand, are happily fulfilled in the new representative legislature of — Prussia, which is said to have been organized entirely with the approbation of the Austrian Cabinet, and we have no doubt will be adopted as the model for all those countries who may be adjudged by the Holy Alliance to be mature for liberal institutions.

But the times for deception are past. Scarcely a man in Prussia will be imposed upon by this shadow of representation, especially when he sees that it has been established by those who have openly espoused the principles of *legitimate* despotism, and led the way in the persecution of science, literature, and every sort of free discussion, and are every hour endeavouring, directly or indirectly, to abrogate or paralyze all that in the time of Von Stein had been done for justice or freedom. In fact, every one of his liberal institutions is now in a state of retrogradation and discredit. The municipal system, for instance, has been modified in such a manner, that it has lost its essential characteristic, that of free management, and has been reduced to an absolute dependence on the government. The important decree, which admitted commoners to the rank of officers in the army, though it still exists nominally, is repealed in fact. During the war in 1813-15, the numerous corps of volunteers were so distributed, that a portion of them was allotted to every regiment. They had the honour to be foremost in danger; and they were assured that the officers of the regiment should be successively chosen from among them. Thus, a great number of those volunteers, mostly commoners, attained the rank of officers in the regiments, particularly in the Guards. But after the year 1818, a commoner (plebeian) rarely became an officer: And in 1819, all plebeian officers were *eliminated* or dismissed from the first regiment of Foot Guards; and this process of elimination is now going on throughout the army.

Such is the present state of Prussia. But it cannot be a permanent state: and the time will certainly come when that power will repent

that she ever sided with *Barbarism*, *Obscurancy*, and Despotism, and, by participating in Austrian perfidy, forfeited that confidence by which she had been so honourably distinguished, and incurred a share of that hatred which is felt for Austria by all enlightened nations.

DANISH REVOLUTION UNDER STRUENSEE.*

GENERAL FALKENSKIOLD, the author of these Memoirs, was a Danish gentleman of respectable family, who, after having served in the French army during the Seven-Years War, and in the Russian army during the first war of Catharine II. against the Turks, was recalled to his country under the administration of Struensee, to take a part in the reform of the military establishment, and to conduct the negotiation at Petersburg, respecting the claims of the Imperial family to the Dutchy of Holstein. He was involved in the fall of Struensee in the beginning of 1772, and was, without trial, doomed to imprisonment for life at Munkholm, a fortress situated on a rock opposite to Drontheim, in the sixty-fourth degree of north latitude. After five years' imprisonment he was released, and permitted to live, first at Montpellier, and afterwards at Lausanne, at which last city (with the exception of one journey to Copenhagen) he past the latter part of his life,* and where he died in September 1820, in the eighty-third year of his age. He left these Memoirs for publication, to his friend M. Secretan, First Judge of the canton of Vaud, who died in the month of May last, when he had almost brought this volume through the press.

It is a respectable, but not amusing book; and as it is the only account known to us of what is called the Danish Revolution of 1772, written by a man of estimable character, who was a victim of that sanguinary intrigue, and had been an actor in the measures which furnished a pretext for it, we are inclined to think, that a brief abridgment of M. Falkenskiold's narrative, with a few additions from other sources, may not be unacceptable to our readers. The remarks with which it seems proper to introduce it will be short.

The constitutional history of the Northern Monarchies has either been unsuccessfully cultivated, or is little known in this country.† The Danish monarchy was elective; but the choice was confined to the reigning family, and generally fell on the eldest son, or on the nearest male. The Privy Council, a body composed of the great officers of state, and of others named by the King, but by fixed rules, exercised the executive power. The King was little more than President of the Council, and commander of the Forces. The clergy being impoverished by the Reformation, and the towns not having acquired

* Memoires de M. Falkenskiold, Officier-Général dans le Service de S. M. Danoise, à l'Epoque de la Catastrophe du Comte de Struensee. Londres et Paris, Treuttel et Würtz.—Vol. xlv. page 360. September, 1826.

† Books in Danish are in this country almost sealed volumes. Suhm's Historical Works on Denmark are said to be of great value. We have also heard that a good history of Norway has lately appeared. What admirable materials now exist in the various languages of Europe for an 'Universal History' really worthy of the name!

importance by traffic, the whole power of the States-General was substantially vested in the order of nobility, who became the absolute masters of the State. The peasants, at least of the Royal demesnes, had, till the reign of Waldemar II. in 1240, formed a fourth estate as in Sweden and in the Tirol; but with the exception of a few districts in Jutland, they had fallen into that condition of villanage in which the peasants on the lands of the nobility (as far as our dim lights reach) appear previously to have been. A more exact account of the state of the Scandinavian Serfs, and of the causes which reduced them to bondage, in a country where there was no foreign conquest to account for so wretched a degradation, would be a valuable contribution towards the history of the rise, progress, and decline of personal and predial slavery in Europe; a work yet to be written, which would fill up an important void in the annals of the human race. In Great Britain such a work might prove of great and immediate utility, by contributing somewhat towards the solution of the tremendous problem which the situation of her American colonies now presents; though it would neither answer that nor any other valuable purpose, if the mind of the writer were contracted by a regard to passing events. There seem to be few undertakings more likely to requite the labour of an impartial and industrious writer of pure taste and acute discernment, with a mind enlarged by philosophy, and well acquainted with the laws and languages of the European nations. It might be worthy of the historian of the middle ages, if he were not employed in continuing that part of his great work, which relates to the constitutional history of his own country.*

In the reign of Frederic III., who ascended the throne in 1648, Denmark was engaged in a disastrous war with Sweden, her provinces on the north of the Baltic were reduced, the capital was on the eve of surrender, and the monarchy was preserved from annihilation by the fleets of the republics of England and Holland. The peace was disgraceful, the country had been laid waste, the finances were exhausted, the army was unpaid and mutinous, the administration discredited, and the government without power. No resource seemed to remain but an assembly of the States, who were expected in some degree to restore order and general confidence.

This assembly accordingly met at Copenhagen in the autumn of the year 1660, for the first time since 1536. The Burghers had distinguished themselves by bravery in the defence of the capital. The Church, too poor since the Reformation to afford a provision for young noblemen, had wholly fallen into the hands of the commons. The Nobility were generally suspected of being so unduly actuated by their jealousy of the crown, as to have obstructed the king's measures for public defence. They increased their unpopularity by now maintaining their own exemption from an equal share of the public burdens; against the first principle of all prudent aristocracies, who never become

* How can the antiquity of families be ascertained in Denmark, where few of the nobility had surnames till the Reformation? There were no titles of honour known in Sweden till the reign of Gustavus Vasa, in the middle of the sixteenth century; nor we believe in Norway till our times. Did any nobility exist antiently in these countries? What is the history of the order of peasants in the Swedish Diet, and of slavery in Sweden? We are unable to give a satisfactory answer to these questions.

the rivals of their subjects for profit, and secure their collective power by curbing the license of individual members ; but conformably to the conduct of our present sticklers for Corn laws and Game laws, who think it wise policy to lay themselves open to the charge of valuing the food of the people less than their own rent, and of sacrificing the liberty of fifteen hundred men in every year to their sports.

Suane, Bishop of Zealand, and Namsen, first Burgomaster of Copenhagen, the speakers of the clergy and the commons, prevailed on these two plebeian orders to curb the insolent domination of the nobles by rendering the crown hereditary. The proposed law was carried to the Nobility, who were so exasperated at this attempt to deprive them of the power of naming the sovereign, that Otto Krug, one of their number, told the two inferior orders that they were unfree. The burghers and clergy showed their resentment at this insult ; and Namsen the speaker, perceiving the temper of his colleagues, instantly answered, ‘ We are not slaves, and the nobles shall soon know it to their cost.’ The nobles rejected the bill, on the pretext that the succession to the crown was not among the objects for which the Diet was called together. The two orders, prepared no doubt for this rejection, on the 10th October 1660, laid their decree before the King. Some of the ministers had already entered into some degree of concert with the popular chiefs. The soldiery had been sounded ; they were found to have a fellow-feeling with the classes of society from which they sprung, and were easily inflamed against a nobility at once haughty and sordid, who refused to contribute to the funds for their pay. The governor was gained over by the Court ; the populace applauded the resistance to aristocratical tyranny ; courage and ambition were breathed into the phlegmatic soul of the King by his consort Sophia Amelia of Brunswick Lunenburgh ; a Princess distinguished by talents, spirit, and an aspiring character. He gave a timid approbation to the proposals. The nobility attempted to leave the city, in order to protest against the legality of a Diet acting without liberty ; but the gates were shut on them. They attempted too late to save some appearance of dignity by modifying their concession, proposing to limit the hereditary succession to males. Nothing was left but unconditional submission. On the 15th of October, the Three Orders presented the law for the establishment of hereditary succession to the King, returning to him the capitulation which he had originally subscribed, and absolving him from his coronation oath. An oath of allegiance was taken, without any reciprocal oath by the King. A discussion then arose about the other alterations in the government, which the abolition of elective monarchy seemed to require. The Bishop of Zealand, availing himself of the mutual jealousy between the Orders, and of the little fear which all felt of a feeble and indolent Prince ; perhaps honestly apprehensive that questions so deeply interesting as those which regarded a new distribution of the supreme authority might, at so critical a moment, occasion commotion and confusion, prevailed on all parties, by a sudden and tumultuary resolution, to vest in the Crown a discretionary, or, as he softly expressed it, a mediatorial power of framing the new constitutional arrangements. Whether he acted from a previous design, or really from fear of the agitation which he saw rising, or whether he was aware of the natural consequences of his own proposition, are questions which must be answered (if they can be so at all) by those who are more deeply read in the secret history of that period. The

single and suspected voice of the Senator Gersdorff, an obnoxious member of the deposed aristocracy, was feebly and vainly raised, to express a hope that not an Eastern despotism, but a wisely limited monarchy, was to be the fruit of the revolution. On the 15th of January 1661, each of the three Orders separately presented to the King a decree, rendering the Crown hereditary in the female as well as male line, and conferring on him the power of regulating the distribution of all political authority, under the hereditary monarchy. In 1665, the King, by virtue of the powers conferred on him by the States, promulgated 'the Royal Law' (in imitation of the *Lex Regia* of the servile lawyers of Imperial Rome), which has ever since been the only fundamental law of Denmark. The Kings of Denmark were therein declared absolute sovereigns, superior to all human laws, and uniting in their own persons all powers and rights of making, repealing, amending, and administering laws, and of acting in all respects according to their good pleasure, except that they could neither alter the established Lutheran Church, nor partition the monarchy, nor change the royal law itself. Thus, perhaps for the first and only time, was despotism established by law, in a civilized age, in a country which possessed the elements of a free government, without a drop of blood spilt, or a single sword drawn in defence of liberty.*

Lord Molesworth, who was minister from King William to the Court of Copenhagen, has given a lively picture of the state of Denmark about thirty years after this legal establishment of despotism.

His elegant Work† breathes the wise and generous spirit of liberty, which the Revolution had awakened in the hearts of the English youth. Like Locke and Addison, he laboured to teach his countrymen the value of civil and religious freedom, by exhibiting the direful effects of absolute power. But he avows his honest purpose; his opportunities of observation were unquestionable; and there is no pretence for disputing his veracity in the statement of facts. The eighth chapter of his book presents an apparently accurate account of the miserable state of Denmark under the absolute monarchy; and though some part of it may be charged on the misrule of the deposed aristocracy, while a still greater portion must, under both governments, be ascribed to the villanage of the husbandmen, enough will still remain to illustrate the character of unlimited monarchy, even without the aid of the still more important consideration, that the continuance of these previous evils must be laid to the charge of a revolution, which, by destroying popular and representative assemblies, blocked up the channels through which alone public opinion can affect national measures, and annihilated all pacific means of reforming abuse.

It became a fashion, however, among slavish sophists, to quote the example of Denmark as a proof of the harmlessness of despotism, and of the indifference of forms of government. 'Even in Denmark,' it was said, 'where the King is legally absolute, civil liberty is respected, justice is well administered, the persons and property of men are secure, the whole administration is more moderate and mild than that of most governments which are called free. The progress of civilization, and the power of public opinion, more than supply the place of

* Molesworth's Denmark, 52. Ancillon, Rev. de l'Europe, vi. Koch, Tableau des Rev. ii. Mallet, Hist. de Danemar. iii. Dumont, Corps Diplomatique, vi.

† Molesworth's Account of Denmark in 1692. Lond. 1694.

‘ popular institutions.’ These representations were aided by that natural disposition of the human mind, when a good consequence unexpectedly appears to spring from a bad institution, to be hurried into the extreme of doubting whether the institution be not itself good, without waiting to balance the evil against the good, or even duly to ascertain the reality of the good. No species of discovery produces so agreeable a surprise, and consequently so much readiness to assent to its truth, as that of the benefits of an evil. There are no paradoxes more captivating than the apologies of old abuses and corruptions.

The honest narrative of Falkenskiold, however, tells us a different tale. The first of the despotic Kings, jealous of the nobility, bestowed the highest offices on adventurers, who were either foreigners, or natives of the lowest sort. Such is the universal practice of Eastern tyrants. Such was, for a century, the condition of Spain, the most Oriental of European countries. The same characteristic feature of despotism is observable in the history of Russia. All talent being extinguished among the superior classes, by withdrawing every object which excites and exercises the faculties, the Prince finds a common capacity for business only abroad, or among the lowest classes of his subjects. Bernstorff a Hanoverian, Lynar a Saxon, and St. Germain, a Frenchman, were among the ablest of the Danish ministers. The country was governed for a hundred years by foreigners. Unacquainted with Denmark, and disdaining even to acquire its language, they employed Danish servants as their confidential agents, and placed them in all the secondary offices. The natives followed their example. Footmen occupied important offices. So prevalent was this practice, that a law was at length passed by the ill-fated Struensee, to forbid this new rule of freedmen. Some of the foreign ministers, with good intentions, introduced ostentatious establishments, utterly unsuitable to one of the poorest countries of Europe. With a population of two millions and a half, and an annual revenue of a million and a half sterling, Denmark, in 1769, had on foot an army of sixty-six thousand men; so that about a ninth of the males of the age of labour were constantly idle and under arms. There was a debt of near ten millions sterling, after fifty years’ peace. An inconvertible paper money, always discredited and daily fluctuating, rendered contracts nugatory, and made it impossible to determine the value of property, or to estimate the wages of labour. The barren and mountainous country of Norway, out of a population of seven hundred thousand souls, contributed twenty thousand men to the army, nine thousand to a local militia, and fourteen thousand enrolled for naval service, forming a total of forty-three thousand conscripts, the fourth part of the labouring males being thus set apart by conscription for military service. The majority of the officers of the army were foreign, and the words of command were given in the German language. The navy was disproportioned to the part of the population habitually employed in maritime occupation; but it was the natural force of the country. The seamen were skilful and brave; and their gallant resistance to Nelson, in 1801, is the greatest honour of the Danish name in modern times. Their colonies were useless and costly.

The administration of law was neither just nor humane. The torture was in constant use. The treatment of the galley-slaves at Copenhagen caused travellers, who had seen the Mediterranean ports, to shudder. One of the mild modes of removing an unpopular minister was to send him a prisoner for life to a dungeon under the Arctic Circle.

The effect of absolute government in debasing the rulers was remarkable in Denmark. One of the principal amusements of Frederic V., who sat on the throne from 1746 to 1766, consisted in mock matches at boxing and wrestling with his favourites, in which it was not always safe to gain an advantage over the Royal gladiator. His son and successor, Christian VII., was either originally deficient in understanding, or had, by vicious practices in boyhood, so much impaired his mental faculties, that considerable wonder was felt at Copenhagen at his being allowed, in 1768, to display his imbecility in a tour through a great part of Europe. The elder Bernstorff, then at the head of the Council, was unable to restrain the King and his favourite Stolk from this indiscreet exposure. Such, however, is the power of ‘the solemn plausibilities of the world,’ that, in France, this unhappy person was complimented by academies, and, in England, works of literature were inscribed to him.* On his arrival at Altona, he was in need of a physician; an attendant whom his prematurely broken constitution made peculiarly essential to him even at the age of nineteen. Struensee, the son of a Lutheran bishop in Holstein, had just begun to practise medicine at Altona, after having been for some time employed as the editor of a newspaper in that city, and was now appointed physician to the King, at the moment when he was projecting a professional establishment at Malaga, or a voyage to India, which his imagination, excited by the perusal of the elder travellers, had covered with ‘barbaric pearl and gold.’ He was then twenty-nine years old, and appears to have been recommended to the Royal favour by an agreeable exterior, pleasing manner, some slight talents and superficial knowledge, with all the subserviency indispensable to a favourite, and with a power of amusing his listless and exhausted master. His name appears in the publications of the time as ‘Doctor Struensee,’ among the attendants of his Danish Majesty in England; and he received, in that character, the honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine from the University of Oxford. Like all other minions, his ascent was rapid, or rather his flight to the pinnacle of power was instantaneous; for the passion of an absolute prince on such occasions knows no bounds, and brooks no delay. Immediately after the King’s return to Copenhagen, Struensee was appointed a Cabinet minister; his brother was made a counsellor of justice; he appointed Brandt, another adventurer, to superintend the palace and the imbecile King; he intrusted Rantzau, a disgraced Danish minister, who had been his colleague in the editorship of the Altona Journal, with the conduct of foreign affairs; he and his friend Brandt were created Earls. Stolk, his predecessor in favour, had fomented and kept up an animosity between the King and Queen. Struensee (unhappily for himself as well as for her) gained the confidence of the Queen, by restoring her to the good graces of her husband. Caroline Matilda, the sister of George III., who then had the misfortune to be Queen of Denmark, is described by Falkenskiold as the handsomest woman of the Court, of a mild and reserved character, and who was well qualified to enjoy and impart happiness, if it had been her lot to be united to an endurable husband. Brandt seems to have been a weak coxcomb, and Rantzau a turbulent and ungrateful intriguer.

The only foreign business which Struensee found pending on his

* Sir W. Jones’s Life of Nadir Shah.

entrance into office was a negotiation with Russia, concerning the pretensions of that formidable competitor to a part of Holstein, which Denmark had unjustly acquired fifty years before. Peter III., the head of the house of Holstein, was proud of his German ancestry, and ambitious of recovering their antient dominions. After his murder, Catharine claimed these possessions, as nominal Regent of Holstein, during the minority of her son. The last act of Bernstorff's administration was a very prudent accommodation, in which Russia agreed to relinquish her claims on Holstein, in consideration of the cession to her by Denmark of the small principality of Oldenburg, the very antient patrimony of the Danish Royal Family. Rantzau, who in his exile had some quarrel with the Russian Government, prevailed on the inexperienced Struensee to delay the execution of this politic convention, and aimed at establishing the influence of France and Sweden at Copenhagen instead of that of Russia, which was then supported by England. He even entertained the chimerical project of driving the Empress from Petersburgh. Falkenskiold, who had been sent on a mission to Petersburgh, endeavoured, after his return, to disabuse Struensee, to show him the ruinous tendency of such rash counsels, and even proposed to him to recall Bernstorff, to facilitate that good understanding which could hardly be restored as long as Counts Osten and Rantzau, the avowed enemies of Russia, were in power. Struensee, like most of those who must be led by others, was exceedingly fearful of being thought to be so. When Falkenskiold warned him against yielding to Rantzau, his plans were shaken: but when the same weapon was turned against Falkenskiold, Struensee returned to his obstinacy. Even after Rantzau had become his declared enemy, he adhered to the plans of that intriguer lest he should be suspected of yielding to Falkenskiold. Wherever there were only two roads, it was easy to lead Struensee, by exciting his fear of being led by the opposite party.

His measures of internal policy appear to have been generally well-meant, but often ill-judged. Some of his reforms were in themselves excellent. But he showed, on the whole, a meddling and restless spirit, impatient of the necessary delay, often employed in petty change, choosing wrong means, braving prejudices that might have been softened, and offending interests that might have been conciliated. He was a sort of inferior Joseph II.; like him, rather a servile copyist than an enlightened follower of Frederic II. His dissolution of the Guards (in itself a prudent measure of economy) turned a numerous body of volunteers into the service of his enemies. The removal of Bernstorff was a very blameable means of strengthening himself. The suppression of the Privy Council, the only feeble restraint on despotic power, was still more reprehensible in itself, and excited the just resentment of the Danish nobility. The repeal of a barbarous law, inflicting capital punishment on adultery, was easily misrepresented to the people as a mark of approbation of that vice. Both Struensee and Brandt had embraced the infidelity at that time prevalent among men of the world, which consisted in little more than a careless transfer of implied faith from Luther to Voltaire. They had been acquainted with the leaders of the philosophical party at Paris, and they introduced the conversation of their masters at Copenhagen. In the same school they were taught to see clearly enough the distempers of European society; but they were not taught (for their teachers did not know) which of these maladies were to be endured, which were to

be palliated, and what were the remedies and regimen by which the remainder might in due time be effectually and yet safely removed. The dissolute manners of the Court contributed to their unpopularity; rather perhaps because the nobility resented the intrusion of upstarts into the sphere of their privileged vice, than because there was any real increase of licentiousness. It must not be forgotten that he was the first minister of an absolute monarchy who abolished the torture, and that he patronised those excellent plans for the emancipation of the enslaved husbandmen, which were first conceived by Reverdil, a Swiss, and of which the adoption by the second Bernstorff has justly immortalized that statesman. He will be honoured by after ages for what offended the Lutheran clergy—the free exercise of religious worship granted to Calvinists, to Moravians, and even to Catholics; for the Danish clergy were ambitious of retaining the right to persecute, not only long after it was impossible to exercise it, but even after they had lost the disposition to do so; at first to overawe, afterwards to degrade non-conformists; in both stages, as a badge of the privileges and honour of an established church. No part, however, of Struensee's private or public conduct can be justly considered as the *cause* of his downfall. His irreligion, his immoralities, his precipitate reforms, his parade of invidious favour, were only the instruments or pretexts by which his competitors for office were able to effect his destruction. Had he either purchased the good will or destroyed the power of his enemies at Court, he might long have governed Denmark, and perhaps have been gratefully remembered by posterity as a reformer of political abuses. He fell a victim to an intrigue for a change of ministers, which, under such a King, was really a struggle for the sceptre.

His last act of political imprudence illustrates both the character of his enemies, and the nature of absolute government. When he was appointed Secretary of the Cabinet, he was empowered to execute such orders as were very urgent, without the signature of the King, on condition, however, that they should be weekly laid before that Prince, to be confirmed or annulled by him under his own hand. This liberty had been practised before his administration; and it was repeated in many thousand instances after his downfall. Under any monarchy the *substantial* fault would have consisted rather in assuming an independence on his colleagues, than in encroaching on any Royal power which was real or practicable. Under so wretched a pageant as the King of Denmark, Struensee showed his folly in obtaining, by a formal order, the power which he might easily have continued to execute without it. But this order was the signal of a clamour against him, as an usurper of Royal prerogative. The guards showed symptoms of mutiny. The garrison of the capital adopted their resentment. The populace became riotous. Rantzau, partly stimulated by revenge against Struensee, for having refused a protection to him against his creditors, being secretly favoured by Count Osten, though then a minister, found means of gaining over Guldberg, an ecclesiastic of obscure birth, full of professions of piety, the preceptor of the King's brother, who prevailed on that Prince and the Queen-Dowager to engage in the design of subverting the administration. Several of Struensee's friends warned him of his danger; but, whether from levity or magnanimity, he neglected their admonitions. Rantzau himself, either jealous of the ascendant acquired by Guldberg among the con-

spirators, or visited by some compunctious remembrances of friendship and gratitude, spoke to Falkenskiold confidentially of the prevalent rumours, and tendered his services for the preservation of his former friend. Falkenskiold distrusted the advances of Rantzau, and answered coldly, 'Speak to Struensee.' Rantzau turned away, saying, 'He will not listen to *me*.' Two days after, on the 16th of January 1772, there was a brilliant masked ball at Court, where the conspirators and their victims mingled in the festivities (as was observed by some foreign ministers present) with more than usual gayety. At four o'clock in the morning, the Queen-Dowager, who was the King's step-mother, her son, and Count Rantzau, entered the King's bedchamber, compelled his valet to awaken him, and required him to sign an order to apprehend the Queen, the Counts Struensee and Brandt, who, with other conspirators, were then engaged (as they pretended) in a plot to depose, if not to murder him. He is said to have hesitated, from fear or obstinacy, perhaps from some remnant of humanity and moral restraint. But he soon yielded; and his verbal assent, or perhaps a silence produced by terror, was thought a sufficient warrant. Rantzau, with three officers, rushed with his sword drawn into the apartment of the Queen, compelled her to rise from her bed, and, in spite of her tears and threats, sent her, half-dressed, a prisoner to the fortress of Cronenbourg, with her infant daughter Louisa, whom she was then suckling, and lady Mostyn, an English lady who attended her. Struensee and Brandt were in the same night thrown into prison, and loaded with irons. On the next day, the King was paraded through the streets in a carriage drawn by eight milk-white horses, as if triumphing after a glorious victory over his enemies, in which he had saved his country. The city was illuminated. The preachers of the established church are charged by several concurring witnesses with inhuman and unchristian invectives from the pulpit against the Queen and the fallen ministers; the good doubtless believing too easily the tale of the victors; the base paying court to the dispensers of preferment; and the bigotted greedily swallowing the most incredible accusations against unbelievers. The populace, inflamed by these declamations, demolished or pillaged from sixty to a hundred houses.

The conspirators distributed among themselves the chief offices. The King was suffered to fall into his former nullity. The formality of his signature was dispensed with. The affairs of the kingdom were conducted in his name, till his son was of age to assume the regency. Guldberg, under the modest title of Secretary of the Cabinet, became Prime Minister. Rantzau was appointed a Privy Councillor, and Osten retained the department of Foreign Affairs; but it is consolatory to add, that, after a few months, both were discarded at the instance of the Court of Petersburg, to complete the desired exchange of Holstein with Oldenburgh.

The object of the conspiracy being thus accomplished, the conquerors proceeded, as usual, to those judicial proceedings against the prisoners, which are intended formally to justify the violence of a victorious faction, but substantially aggravate its guilt. A commission was appointed to try the accused. Its leading members were the chiefs of the conspiracy, — men who could not acquit their opponents without confessing themselves to be deeply guilty. *Guldberg*, one of the members, had to determine, by the sentence which he pronounced, whether he was himself a rebel. General Eichstedt, the President, had per-

sonally arrested several of the prisoners, and was, by his judgment on Struensee, who had been his benefactor, to decide, that the criminality of that minister was of so deep a dye as to cancel the obligations of gratitude. To secure his impartiality still more, he was appointed a Minister, and promised the office of Preceptor of the Hereditary Prince,—the permanence of which appointments must have partly depended on the general conviction that the prisoners were guilty.

The charges against Struensee and Brandt are dated on the 21st of April 1772. The defence of Struensee was drawn up by his counsel on the 22d; that of Brandt was prepared on the 23d. Sentence was pronounced against both on the 25th. On the 27th it was approved, and ordered to be executed by the King. On the 28th, after their right hands were cut off on the scaffold, they were beheaded. For three months they had been closely and very cruelly imprisoned. The proceedings of the commission were secret. The prisoners were not confronted with each other; they heard no witnesses; they read no depositions; they do not appear to have seen any counsel till they had received the indictments. It is characteristic of this scene to add, that the King went to the Opera on the 25th, after signifying his approbation of the sentence; and that, on the 27th, the day of its solemn confirmation, there was a masqued ball at Court. On the 28th, the day of execution, the King again went to the Opera. The passion which prompts an absolute monarch to raise an unworthy favourite to honour is still less disgusting than the levity and hardness with which, on the first alarm, he always abandons the same favourite to destruction. It may be observed, that the very persons who had represented the patronage of operas and masquerades as one of the offences of Struensee, were the same who thus unseasonably paraded their unhappy Sovereign through a succession of such amusements.

The volume before us contains the written answers of Struensee to the preliminary questions of the commission, the substance of the charges against him, and the defence made by his counsel. The first was written on the 14th of April, when he was alone in a dungeon, with irons on his hands and feet, and an iron collar fastened to the wall round his neck. The indictment is prefaced by a long declamatory invective against his general conduct and character, such as still dishonour the criminal proceedings of most nations, and from which England has probably been saved by the scholastic subtlety and dryness of her system of what is called special pleading. Laying aside his supposed connexion with the Queen, which is reserved for a few separate remarks, the charges are either perfectly frivolous, or sufficiently answered by his counsel, in a defence which he was allowed only one day to prepare, and which bears evident marks of being written with the fear of the victorious faction before the eyes of the feeble advocate. One is, that he caused the young Prince to be trained so hardily as to endanger his life; in answer to which, he refers to the judgment of physicians, appeals to the restored health of the young Prince, and observes, that even if he had been wrong, his fault could have been no more than an error of judgment. The truth is, that he was guilty of a ridiculous mimicry of the early education of *Emile*, at a time when all Europe was intoxicated by the writings of Rousseau. To the second charge, that he had issued, unknown to the King, an order for the incorporation of the Foot Guards with the troops of the line on the 21st of December, 1771, and, on their refusal to obey, had obtained

an order from the King on the 24th for their reduction, he answered, that the draught of the order had been read and approved by the King on the 21st, signed and sealed by him on the 23d, and finally confirmed by the order for reducing the refractory guards, as issued by his Majesty on the 24th; so that he could scarcely be said to have been even in form guilty of a two days' usurpation. It might have been added, that it was immediately fully pardoned by the Royal confirmation; that Rantzau, and others of his enemies, had taken an active share in it; and that it was so recent, that the conspirators must have resolved on their measures before its occurrence, which reduces it to a mere pretext. He was charged with taking or granting exorbitant pensions; and he answered, seemingly with truth, that they were not higher than those of his predecessors. He was accused also of having falsified the public accounts; to which his answer is necessarily too detailed for our purpose, but appears to be satisfactory. Both these offences, if they had been committed, could not have been treated as high treason in any country not wholly barbarous; and the evidence on which the latter and more precise of the charges rested was a declaration of the imbecile and imprisoned King on an intricate matter of account reported to such a tribunal by an agent of enemies who had determined on the destruction of the prisoner.

Thus stands the case of the unfortunate Struensee on all the charges but one, as it appears in the accusation which his enemies had such time and power to support, and on the defence made for him under such cruel disadvantages. That he was innocent of the political offences laid to his charge is rendered highly probable by the 'Narrative of his Conversion,' published soon after his execution by Dr. Munter, a divine of Copenhagen, appointed by the Danish government to attend him*; a composition, which bears the strongest marks of the probity and sincerity of the writer, and is a perfect model of the manner in which a person, circumstanced like Struensee, ought to be treated by a kind and considerate minister of religion. Men of all opinions, who peruse this narrative, must own that it is impossible to touch the wounds of a sufferer with more tenderness, to reconcile the agitated penitent to himself, to present religion as the consoler, not as the disturber of his dying moments, gently to dispose him to try his own actions by a higher test of morality, to fill his mind with indulgent benevolence towards his fellow-men, and to exalt it to a reverential love of boundless perfection. Dr. Munter deserved the confidence of Struensee, and seems entirely to have won it. The unfortunate man freely owned his private licentiousness, his success in corrupting the principles of the victims of his desires, his rejection, not only of religion, but also in theory, but not quite in feeling, of whatever ennobles and elevates the mind in morality; the imprudence and rashness by which he brought ruin on his friends, and plunged his parents in deep affliction; and the ignoble and impure motives of all his public actions, which, in the eye of reason, deprived them of that pretension to virtuous character to which their outward appearance might seem to entitle them. He felt for his friends with unusual tenderness. Instead of undue concealment from Munter, he is perhaps chargeable with betraying to him secrets which were not exclusively

* Reprinted by the late learned and exemplary Mr. Rennell of Kensington. London, 1824.

his own. But he denies the truth of the political charges against him ; more especially of peculation and falsification of accounts. (*Munter*, 112, 113. 122. 129. 130. 160., particularly 166. and 167. 171. 190.)

The charges against Brandt would be altogether unworthy of consideration, were it not for the light which one of them throws on the whole of this atrocious procedure. The main accusation against him was, that he had beaten, flogged, and scratched the sacred person of the King. His answer was, that the King, who had a passion for wrestling and boxing, had repeatedly challenged him to a match, had severely beaten him five or six times ; that he did not gratify his master's taste till after these provocations ; that two of the witnesses against him, servants of the King, had indulged their master in the same sport ; and that he received liberal gratifications, and continued to enjoy the Royal favour for months after this pretended treason. The King inherited this perverse taste in amusements from his father, whose palace was the theatre of the like kingly sports. It is impossible to entertain the least doubt of the truth of this defence. It affords a natural and probable explanation of a fact which would be otherwise incomprehensible.

A suit for divorce was commenced against the Queen, on the ground of criminal connexion with Struensee, who was himself convicted of high treason for that connexion. This unhappy Princess was sacrificed, at the age of seventeen, to the brutal caprices of a husband, who, if he had been a private man, would have been deemed incapable of the deliberate consent which is essential to marriage. She early suffered from his violence, though she so far complied with his fancies as to ride with him in male apparel, and even with buckskin breeches—an indecorum for which she was sharply reprehended by her mother, the Princess Dowager of Wales, in a short interview between them, during a visit which that Princess paid to her brother at Gotha, after an uninterrupted residence of thirty-four years in England. The King had suffered the Russian minister at Copenhagen to treat her with open rudeness. He disgraced his favourite cousin, the Prince of Hesse, for taking her part. He never treated her with common civility, till they were reconciled by Struensee, at that period of overflowing good-nature when that minister obtained the recal from banishment of the ungrateful Rantzau. The evidence against her consisted in a number of circumstances (none of them incapable of an innocent explanation) sworn to by her attendants, who were employed as spies on her conduct. She owned that she was guilty of much imprudence ; but in her dying moments she declared to *M. Roques*, pastor of the French church at Zell, that she never had been unfaithful to her husband.* It is true, that her own signature affixed to a confession was alleged against her. But if General Falkenskiold was rightly informed, (for he has every mark of honest intention,) that signature proves nothing but the malice and cruelty of her enemies. Schack, the counsellor sent to interrogate her at Cronenbourg, was received by her with indignation when he spoke to her of connexion with Struensee. When he showed Struensee's confession to her, he artfully intimated that the fallen minister would be subjected to a very cruel death if he was found to have falsely criminated the Queen. 'What!' she exclaimed,

* Communicated by *M. Roques* to M. Secretan, the editor of Falkenskiold, on the 7th March 1780. Falk. 234.

‘do you believe that if I was to confirm this declaration, I should save the life of that unfortunate man?’ Schack answered by a profound bow. The Queen took a pen, wrote the first syllable of her name, and fainted away. Schack completed the signature, and carried away the fatal document in triumph. Struensee himself, however, had confessed his intercourse to the commissioners. It is said that his confession was obtained by threats of torture, facilitated by some hope of life, and influenced by a knowledge that the proceeding against the Queen could not be carried beyond divorce. But his repeated and deliberate avowals to Dr. Munter do not (it must be owned) allow of such an explanation. Scarcely any supposition favourable to this unhappy Princess remains, unless it should be thought likely, that as Dr. Munter’s narrative was published under the eye of her oppressors, they might have caused the confessions of Struensee to be inserted in it by their own agents, without the consent, perhaps without the knowledge, of Munter, whose subsequent life is so little known, that we cannot determine whether he ever had the means of exposing the falsification. It must be confessed, that internal evidence does not favour this hypothesis; for the passages of the narrative, which contain the avowals of Struensee, have a striking appearance of genuineness. If Caroline betrayed her sufferings to Struensee; if she was led to a dangerous familiarity with a pleasing young man who had rendered essential services to her; if mixt motives of confidence, gratitude, disgust, and indignation, at last plunged her into an irretrievable fault; the reasonable and virtuous will reserve their abhorrence for the conspirators, who, for the purposes of their own ambition, punished her infirmity by ruin, endangered the succession to the Crown, and disgraced their country in the eyes of Europe. It is difficult to contain the indignation which naturally arises from the reflection, that at this very time, and with a full knowledge of the fate of the Queen of Denmark, the Royal Marriage Act was passed in England, for the avowed purpose of preventing the only marriages of preference, which a princess at least, has commonly the opportunity of forming. Of a monarch, who thought so much more of the pretended degradation of his brother than of the cruel misfortunes of his sister, less cannot be said than that he must have had more pride than tenderness. Even the capital punishment of Struensee, for such an offence, will be justly condemned by all but English lawyers, who ought to be silenced by the consciousness that the same barbarous disproportion of a penalty to an offence is sanctioned in the like case by their own law.

Caroline Matilda died at Zell about three years after her imprisonment. The last tidings which reached the Princess-Dowager of Wales, on her death-bed, was the imprisonment of this ill-fated daughter, which was announced to her in a letter dictated to the King of Denmark by his new masters, and subscribed with his own hand. Two days before her death, though in a state of agony, she herself wrote a letter to the nominal sovereign, exhorting him to be at least indulgent and lenient towards her daughter. After hearing the news from Copenhagen she scarcely swallowed any nourishment. The intelligence was said to have accelerated her death; but the dreadful malady under which she suffered, neither needed the co-operation of sorrow, nor was of a nature to be much affected by it.

We may now return, for a moment, to Falkenskiold, the writer of these Memoirs, the victim and narrator of the Revolution. He was

apprehended at five o'clock in the morning of the 17th of January, by Colonel Eichstedt, who read aloud an order, appointing himself governor of Copenhagen, and a warrant for the apprehension of Falkenskiold, with two other officers. Falkenskiold examined these documents, which, together with the signature purporting to be that of the King, appeared to be written by Eichstedt himself. Remonstrance was, however, vain. He was thrown into a dungeon of ten feet square, in a naval prison, used for the vilest criminals, where he remained seven weeks, without fire, without books, without correspondence or other intercourse with the world. He was refused clean linen and water for washing; he was obliged to carve and eat with his fingers; he was not allowed wine; he was at last deprived of tea, and even tooth-powder, by means of which it was said that he might poison himself. In April he was examined by an inferior commission; and the interrogatories alone are sufficient to show that there never was any colour of a charge against him;—that his whole offence consisted in having served the public, under the administration of Struensee; and that his apprehension, as well as that of most of the others, was for the sole purpose of giving an appearance of reality and strength to the supposed conspiracy, by the numbers who thus seemed to be involved in it. One of the accusations against him was, that when playing at cards, while the King, who was on foot, spoke to him, he made answer without rising from his chair, after the King had particularly desired that none of the party should stand up when addressed by him! He never was tried; but in June it was announced to him, that the King had directed that he should be imprisoned for life. The particulars of his sufferings on the Rock of Munkholm are related with simplicity and calmness. The memorials of former prisoners, who had preceded him on this rock, served to attest the exactness of the picture drawn by Molesworth of the cruel administration which had prevailed in Denmark since the establishment of absolute monarchy. Count Griffinfeld, Chancellor of the kingdom in the latter part of the seventeenth century, (the very period of which the honest and eloquent Molesworth writes,) had, like Struensee, been condemned to death by his successors in office, to justify their conspiracy against him. On the scaffold his punishment was changed into perpetual imprisonment; and he endured the horrors of the most rigorous confinement for nineteen years, at Munkholm, when he died of the stone, which the waters of that place are said to occasion. Falkenskiold was released in 1776, and spent the greater part of his remaining life at Lausanne, where he enjoyed the friendship of Gibbon, of Tissot, the celebrated physician, and of Reverdil, who, as the true author of the enfranchisement of the Danish peasants, deserves a place in the first class of benefactors of the human species. The candour of his narrative, and the temper with which he speaks of his oppressors, give great weight to his testimony, and prove him to have been worthy of the friendship of good men. He relates, without triumph, the retributive justice with which the present king, when admitted into the Council in 1784, marked his entrance into power, by the expulsion of Guldberg, the ringleader in the conspiracy which branded the character, and shortened the life of his mother—a man, we speak it with regret and shame, of some note as a Danish writer.

What effects were produced by the interference of the British Minister for the Queen—how far the conspirators were influenced by fear

of the resentment of King George III.—and in what degree that monarch himself may have acquiesced in the measures finally adopted towards his sister,—are questions which must be answered by the historian from other sources than those from which we reason on the present occasion. The only legal proceeding ever commenced against the Queen was a suit for divorce, which was in form perfectly regular; for in all Protestant countries but England, the offended party is entitled to release from the bands of marriage by the ordinary tribunals. It is said that two legal questions were then agitated in Denmark, and ‘even’ occasioned great debates among the Commissioners; 1. Whether the Queen, as a Sovereign, could be legally tried by her subjects; and, 2. Whether, as a foreign Princess, she was amenable to the law of Denmark?’ But it is quite certain, on general principles, (assuming that no Danish law had made their Queen a partaker of the sovereign power, or otherwise expressly exempted her from legal responsibility,) that, however high in dignity and honour, she was still a subject, and that, as such, she, as well as every other person wherever born, resident in Denmark, was, during her residence at least, amenable to the laws of that country.

It is certain that there was little probability of hostility from England. Engaged in a contest with the people at home, and dreading the approach of a civil war with America, Lord North was not driven from an inflexible adherence to his pacific system by the partition of Poland itself. An address for the production of the diplomatic correspondence respecting the French conquest, or purchase of Corsica, was moved in the House of Commons on the 17th of November 1768, for the purpose of condemning that unprincipled transaction, and with a view indirectly to blame the supineness of the English ministers respecting it. The motion was negatived by a majority of 230 to 84, on the same ground as that on which the like motions respecting Naples and Spain were resisted in 1822 and 1823, that such proposals were too little if war was intended, and too much if it was not. The weight of authority, however, did not coincide with the power of numbers. Mr. Grenville, the most experienced statesman, and Mr. Burke, the man of greatest genius and wisdom in the House, voted in the minority, and argued in support of the motion. Such, said the latter, was the general zeal for the Corsican, that if the ministers would withdraw the proclamation issued by Lord Bute’s government, forbidding British subjects to assist the Corsican ‘rebels,’ (a measure similar to our ‘Foreign Enlistment Act,’) private individuals would supply the brave insurgents with sufficient means of defence. The young Duke of Devonshire, then at Florence, had sent four hundred pounds to Corsica, and raised two thousand pounds more, for the same purpose, by a subscription among the English in Italy.* A Government which looked thus passively at such breaches of the system of Europe on occasions when the national feeling was favourable to a more generous, perhaps a more wise policy, would hardly have been diverted from its course by any indignities or outrages which a foreign government could offer to an

* These particulars are not to be found in the printed debate, which copies the account of this discussion given in the Annual Register by Mr. Burke, written, like his other abstracts of Parliamentary proceedings, with a brevity and reserve, produced by his situation as one of the most important parties in the argument, and by the severe notions then prevalent on such publications.

individual of however illustrious rank. Little, however, as the likelihood of armed interference by England was, the apprehension of it might have been sufficient to enable the more wary of the Danish conspirators to contain the rage of their most furious accomplices. The ability and spirit displayed by Sir Robert Murray Keith, on behalf of the Queen of Denmark, was soon after rewarded by his promotion to the embassy at Vienna, always one of the highest places in English diplomacy. His vigorous remonstrances in some measure compensated for the timidity of his government, and he powerfully aided the cautious policy of Count Osten, who moderated the passions of his colleagues, though he gave the most specious colour to their acts in his official correspondence with foreign powers.

Contemporary observers of enlarged minds considered these events in Denmark, not so much as they affected individuals, or were connected with temporary policy, as in the higher light in which they indicated the character of nations, and betrayed the prevalence of dispositions inauspicious to the prospects of mankind. None of the unavowed writings of Mr. Burke, and perhaps few of his acknowledged writings, exhibit more visible marks of his hand than the History of Europe in the Annual Register of 1772, which opens with a philosophical and eloquent vindication of the policy which watched over the balance of power, and with a prophetic display of the evils which were to flow from the renunciation of that policy by France and England in suffering the partition of Poland. The little transactions of Denmark, which were despised by many as a petty and obscure intrigue, and affected the majority only as the part of the romance or tragedy of real life, appeared to the philosophical statesman pregnant with melancholy instruction. ‘It has,’ says he, ‘been too hastily and too generally received an opinion with the most eminent writers, and from them too carelessly received by the world, that the Northern nations, at all times and without exception, have been passionate admirers of liberty, and tenacious to an extreme of their rights. A little attention will show, that this opinion ought to be received with many restrictions. Sweden and Denmark have, within little more than a century, given absolute demonstration to the contrary: and the vast nation of the Russes, who overspread so great a part of the North, have, at all times, so long as their name has been known, or their acts remembered by history, been incapable of any other than a despotic government. And notwithstanding the contempt in which we hold the Eastern nations, and the slavish disposition we attribute to them, it may be found, if we make a due allowance for the figurative style and manner of the Orientals, that the official papers, public acts and speeches, at the Courts of Petersburg, Copenhagen, and Stockholm, are in as unmanly a strain of servility and adulation as those of the most despotic of the Asiatic governments.’

It was doubtless an error to class Russia with the Scandinavian nations, merely because they were both comprehended within the same parallels of latitude. The Russians differ from them in race, a circumstance always to be considered, though more liable to be exaggerated or underrated than any other which contributes to determine the character of nations. No Sarmatian people has ever been free. The Russians profess a religion, founded on the blindest submission of the understanding, which is, in their modern modification of it, directed to their temporal sovereign. They were for ages the slaves of the

Tartars; the larger part of their dominions is Asiatic, and they were, till lately, with justice, more regarded as an Eastern than as a Western nation. But the nations of Scandinavia were of that Teutonic race who were the founders of civil liberty. They early embraced the Reformation, which ought to have taught them the duty of exercising reason freely on every subject. Their spirit has never been broken by a foreign yoke. Writing in the year when despotism was established in Sweden, and its baneful effects so strikingly exhibited in Denmark, Mr. Burke may be excused for comparing these then unhappy countries to those vast regions of Asia which have been the immemorial seat of slavery. The revolution which we have been considering shows the propriety of the parallel in all its parts. If it only proved that absolute power corrupts the tyrant, there are many too debased to dread it on that account. But it shows him at Copenhagen, as at Ispahan, reduced to personal insignificance, a pageant occasionally exhibited by his ministers, or a tool in their hands, compelled to do whatever suits their purpose, without power to save the life even of a minion, and without security, in cases of extreme violence, for his own. Nothing can more clearly prove, that, under absolute monarchy, good laws, if they could by a miracle be framed, must always prove utterly vain; that civil liberty cannot exist without political liberty; and that the detestable distinction, lately attempted in this country by the advocates of intolerance, between freedom and political power, never can be allowed in practice, without, in the first instance, destroying all securities for good government, and very soon introducing every species of corruption and oppression.

The part of Mr. Burke's History which we have quoted is followed by a memorable passage, which seems, in later times, to have escaped the notice both of his opponents and adherents, and was probably forgotten by himself. After speaking of the final victory of Louis XV. over the French Parliaments, of whom he says, 'that their fate seems 'to be finally decided*, and the few remains of public liberty that 'were preserved in these illustrious bodies are now no more,' he proceeds to general reflection on the condition and prospects of Europe. 'In a word, if we seriously consider the mode of supporting 'great standing armies, which becomes daily more prevalent, *it will 'appear evident, that nothing less than a convulsion that will shake the 'globe to its centre, can ever restore the European nations to that liberty 'by which they were once so much distinguished.* The Western world 'was its seat until another more western was discovered: and that 'other will probably be its asylum when it is hunted down in every 'other part of the world. Happy it is that the worst of times may 'have one refuge left for humanity.'

This passage is not so much a prophecy of the French Revolution, as a declaration that, without a convulsion as deep and dreadful as that great event, the European nations had no chance of being restored to their antient dignity and their natural rights. Had it been written after, or at least soon after the events, it might have been blamed as indicating too little indignation against guilt, and compassion for

* They were re-established four years afterwards. But as this arose, not from the spirit of the nation, but from the advisers of the young King, who had full power to grant or withhold their restoration, the want of foresight is rather apparent than substantial.

suffering. Even when considered as referring to the events of a distant futurity, it may be charged with a pernicious exaggeration, which seems to extenuate revolutionary horrors by representing them as inevitable, and by laying it down falsely that wisdom and virtue can find no other road to liberty. It would, however, be very unjust to charge such a purpose on Mr. Burke, or indeed to impute such a tendency to his desponding anticipations. He certainly appears to have foreseen, that the progress of despotism would at length provoke a general and fearful resistance, the event of which, with a wise scepticism, he does not dare to foretell; rather, however, as a fond and therefore fearful lover of European liberty, foreboding that she will be driven from her antient seats, and leave the inhabitants of Europe to be numbered with Asiatic slaves. The fierceness of the struggle he clearly saw, and most distinctly predicts; for he knew that the most furious passions of human nature would be enlisted on both sides. He does not conclude from this dreadful prospect, that the chance of liberty ought to be relinquished, rather than expose a country to the probability or possibility of such a contest; but, on the contrary, very intelligibly declares, by the melancholy tone in which he adverts to the expulsion of liberty, that every evil is to be hazarded for her preservation. It would be well if most of his professed adherents would bear in mind, that such is the true doctrine of most of those whom they dread and revile as incendiaries. The friends of freedom only profess that those who have recourse to the only remaining means of preserving or acquiring liberty, are not morally responsible for the evils which may arise in an inevitable combat. The Danish dominions continued to be administered in the name of Christian VII. for the long period of thirty-six years after the deposition of Struensee. The mental incapacity under which he always laboured was not formally recognised till the association of his son, now King of Denmark, with him in the Government. He did not cease to breathe till 1808, after a nominal reign of forty-three years, and an animal existence of near sixty. During the latter part of that period, the real rulers of the country were wise and honest men.

Denmark enjoyed a considerable interval of prosperity under the moderate administration of Bernstorff, whose merit in forbearing to join the coalition against France in 1793 is greatly enhanced by his personal abhorrence of the Revolution. His adoption of Reverdil's measures of enfranchisement sheds the purest glory on his name. The fate of Denmark, after the ambition of Napoleon had penetrated into the North, the iniquity with which she was stripped by Russia of Norway, for adherence to an alliance which Russia had compelled her to join, and as a compensation to Sweden for Finland, of which Sweden had been robbed by Russia, are events too familiarly known to be recounted here. She is now no more than a principality, whose arms are still surmounted by a royal crown. A free and popular government, under the same wise administration, might have arrested many of these calamities, and afforded a new proof, that the attachment of a people to a government, in which they have a palpable interest and a direct share, is the most secure foundation of defensive strength.

The political misfortunes of Denmark disprove the commonplace opinion, that all enslaved nations deserve their fate: for the moral and intellectual qualities of the Danes seem to qualify them for the firm and prudent exercise of the privileges of freemen. All those by whom

they are well known commend their courage, honesty, and industry. The information of the laborious classes has made a considerable progress since their enfranchisement. Their literature, like that of the other Northern nations, has generally been dependent on that of Germany, with which country they are closely connected in language and religion. In the last half century, they have made persevering efforts to build up a national literature. The resistance of their fleet in 1801 has been the theme of many Danish poets; but we believe that they have been as unsuccessful in their bold competition with Campbell, as their mariners in their gallant contest with Nelson. A poor and somewhat secluded country, with a small and dispersed population, which has produced Tycho Brahe, one of the greatest names in the history of astronomy, Oehlenschläger, one of the first tragic poets of our age, and Thorwaldsen, the most celebrated artist of the Continent, must be owned to have contributed her full contingent to the intellectual greatness of Europe.

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE DEMOCRATICAL CONSTITUTION OF VENICE.*

As the new collection of materials for the history of Venice, which is here announced, has not yet been completely published, we know not how much of Galliccioli's work it will comprise. We happen to have in our possession, however, a complete copy of that elaborate work; and are strongly tempted to introduce it to the knowledge of our readers, as it is, we believe, in very few hands, and we do not think it probable that they will meet with any account of it elsewhere. So little indeed is it known, that even M. Daru, whose laborious researches, perhaps, no other documents have escaped, neither refers to it in the body of his work, nor names it in the list of the books he consulted. The author was long Greek professor in Venice; and published his voluminous work on the antiquities of that city in 1795-6; soon after which he died at an advanced age.

His researches are neither directed by a spirit of philosophy, nor pursued with a view to support any political system or party. Neither the character of his mind, indeed, nor his habits or taste in composition, seem to have fitted him for any higher task than that of investigating and compiling the most minute, and apparently the most insignificant, matters of fact. In the discharge of this task, however, he is indefatigable and exact. He takes care to inform us, for instance, how many hundred candles were burnt round the coffin of a citizen in the year 958; what description of stuffs the daughter of another brought her husband as a dower in the year 867, and what was the nature and course of the nuptial festivities; what was the ordinary diet of the people; what variety of the Venetian dialect was at that time current among them; and what again was the style afterwards adopted by Marco Polo and those merchants who gratified the curiosity

* *Memorie Venete di Giovanni Galliccioli, prete, per la nuova Collezione di documenti per servire alla Storia Veneziana. Venezia, 1826.—Vol. xlv. page 75. June, 1827.*

and awakened the wonder of their fellow citizens, by the relation of their adventures in Arabia and Persia. He quotes and expounds the remains of monumental inscriptions still existing in the churches of Venice, and transcribes marriage-articles registered by antient notaries, and fragments of the account books and ledgers of the earliest merchants of Venice. His great merit, however, is, that he was not deterred by the profound obscurity which covered the history of Venice for nearly ten centuries : but plunged without fear, and laboured without disgust, in an abyss in which he had no professed guide, and but few accidental assistants.

The earliest of her annalists is not older than the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth centuries : but the minute facts, of an anterior date, which Gallicioli has rescued from oblivion, are like lamps, which, though dim and feeble, yet enable us, by their number and arrangement, to find our way through the thick darkness which surrounds us. Thus, the magnificent obsequies of a private citizen afford some indication of the general wealth of the republic ; the marriage ceremonies and festivities illustrate the domestic and national manners ; while the account-books throw a still stronger and steadier light, both on the state of the language in this most antient of Italian cities, and on the extent of her commerce, and the character of her citizens, in an age when they were at once merchants and soldiers, travellers and conquerors. From these materials, trivial as they at first sight appear, we derive most valuable information for determining our judgment of that proud and singular Democracy, which, with progressive modifications, and through sanguinary vicissitudes, subsisted in the republic for nearly a thousand years.

We shall now endeavour to lay before our readers a rapid survey of this constitution, from its origin, in the beginning of the fourth century, to its subversion by the Aristocracy, at the beginning of the fourteenth.

An accurate knowledge of these memorable institutions, of the circumstances in which they originated, and the corruptions into which they passed, must appear the more desirable and curious, when it is considered, that as this remarkable state arose before the empire of Rome was swept away, endured through the barbarism of the northern irruptions, and was finally extinguished within our own times, its history forms a connecting chain—we believe the only one that can now be traced—between the Europe of the Romans, of the middle ages, and of modern history ! It is as if we were questioning the sole survivor of these great and overwhelming revolutions, and inquiring into the habits and constitution of a yet living antediluvian.

But, independently of this consideration, the mere fact that this state preserved its independence for fourteen hundred years would offer ample inducements to investigate the cause of a political longevity without a parallel in the annals of human society : and the curiosity which this phenomenon is calculated to excite is further increased by the recollection, that Venice owed its existence to a handful of fugitives, who sought shelter among the rocks and marshes of the Adriatic ; that her power rose to a formidable height with astonishing rapidity, while her commercial prosperity kept pace with her power, and soon reached a pitch unknown to the greatest states of antiquity ; and that this double power, maintained almost without interruption for nearly eleven centuries, declined at last, not from any principle or accident of

internal decay, but through the unavoidable influence of extrinsic events, which surrounded her with formidable rivals, or raised up against her new and irresistible enemies. The invasion of her possessions and colonies in the Levant and the Mediterranean by the new-sprung power of the Turks; the maritime expeditions of the Portuguese, and their consequent trade with India—the discovery of America—the powerful military establishments set on foot by all the monarchs of Europe, and the occupation of a great part of Italy by one or other of them, all combined to rob Venice of her supremacy, and to beset her with growing dangers.

But however unlooked for were these events, and however irresistible their nearly simultaneous operation, though they unavoidably abridged the power and undermined the greatness of the Republic, they were not necessarily inconsistent with the maintenance of her independence. They coincided, however, in point of time, with the gradual subversion of her Popular institutions—the mainspring of her internal prosperity, and of her former influence in Europe. The pomp and splendour, however, of her latter days still remained unimpaired; and for more than three centuries after these events, her new constitution underwent no change; and after being so long stationary in appearance, though in fact verging to decay, the last seventy years of her political existence were passed in profound peace.

This state of things would doubtless have continued, had not the mighty shocks of that revolution, which has agitated nations and overthrown monarchies of much greater strength, combined with her own decrepitude to hasten her dissolution. In that mighty convulsion, she fell—unresisting, and almost unnoticed.

What were the peculiarities of the government and the people who could thus maintain their independence and substantial prosperity for a period so much beyond the ordinary duration of separate and especially small nations, has never been very satisfactorily explained. Her history has been attempted, with various degrees of fidelity and talent, by many native and some foreign authors: but the documents most essential to the inquiry were, by the very laws of the Republic, long concealed among the mysteries of the State Inquisition; and we may form some notion of the difficulty of obtaining any accurate knowledge of her internal affairs, when we recollect that even Cardinal Bembo, though a patrician of Venice, a zealous champion of her fame, and the most distinguished writer of his time, could not overcome the jealousy excited by his connexion with the Court of Rome. His native city, indeed, appointed him her historiographer, but denied him access to her archives.* His work is consequently without spirit or authority, and remarkable rather for an ostentatious display of a classical style, than for the clear statements and fearless devotion to truth which should characterise a historian. Accordingly, it is not read,—and, in fact, is not readable.

* We learn this fact from a writer who was at once Doge and historian of the literature of the Republic:

‘Se la storia del Bembo paresse a taluno un po’ troppo asciutta, e vi desiderasse ricercati più a fondo i nascosti pensieri de’ Principi, è da sapere che per essere il Bembo uomo di Chiesa, e però non partecipe del Governo, gli fu chiuso l’adito ai pubblici archivi; onde penuriò di notizie, e fu costretto a cercarle alla meglio da memorie private. Di che molto si duole egli medesimo, particolarmente in una lettera a Giambattista Rannusio, Segretario del Consiglio di Dieci.’—Foscarini, *Litteratura Venezia*, lib. iii.

The archives, containing the more important secrets of the state, were, for the first time, disclosed, at the fall of the Republic, by the French; when, among those who eagerly explored that chaos of interminable documents, no one laboured with so much zeal and discernment as M. Daru. His history, accordingly, possesses very high merits, though combined with many defects, some of which we shall now endeavour to supply. In particular, he does not appear to have perceived that the State Inquisition insinuated itself into the very vitals of a constitution previously free, and resting on the two great principles of hatred to monarchy, and jealousy of all political dependence upon, or even close connexion with, any other people. In this point of view, the history of the ten centuries of the Venetian Democracy acquires a new and most important interest for the philosopher as well as for the statesman. If we should ever continue our dissertations beyond that epoch, M. Daru shall certainly be our historical leader, as his industry, learning, and sagacity will entitle him to be. But with regard to this earlier period, and the first rudiments of that State Inquisition which gives its character to all later transactions, we cannot adopt him as our guide.

That the seeds of this all-powerful and most despotical tribunal were sown in the very foundations of the Venetian constitution, and were striking their roots, deeply, though in secret, for the first ten centuries of its existence, had long been our impression and belief, though resting upon little else than the general character of the people and the course of the government. Recent discoveries, however, have turned these impressions into certainty; and the facts and documents now brought to light have sufficiently cleared up this important part of its story.

Detestation of the government of one man, and an inflexible determination to remain a separate and distinct people, were, as we have already said, the two principles by which the Venetians were guided from their birth as a nation, and upon which they continued to act with the steadiness and success of a natural instinct. This will appear in the first concoction of her government—in the gradual development of her institutions—and in all their oscillations, up to the period when they acquired a stability, which resisted all farther shocks and alterations. In submitting to the common necessity of obeying one leader in war, and having a supreme magistrate to guard their laws, maintain their religion, and preside over the ordinary tribunals, the Venetians never for a moment relinquished their right of conferring these powers by election; they continually asserted their power to degrade their possessor from the throne to which they had raised him, nor did they deem any means for the attainment of this end unlawful: they gradually limited his authority, till at length they subjected him to the control of an Aristocracy, which derived its constitutional claim to represent the people from the natural influence of wealth, and the respect derived from a long line of renowned ancestors. To vest the substantial power in an oligarchy like this, arising from the very nature of civil society, it is only necessary that its members should act with some degree of concert; but the Venetian Few at last matured this concert into an artful and organised conspiracy; and, by carefully preserving the republican forms, together with the inveterate hatred of monarchy, and the national independence, continued to increase their power without awakening suspicion; while, as a means of accommo-

dating the primitive laws of the land to their own exclusive interest, they seized eagerly on every opportunity of enforcing, and bringing into operation, such arbitrary expedients as, in former ages, had only been resorted to in cases of extraordinary emergency. The authority and number of these unconstitutional precedents thus gradually increased, until they came to be regarded as practical parts of the constitution, and, in fact, furnished the elements out of which the State Inquisition was eventually formed.

To illustrate what we have now said, we shall proceed to lay before our readers such a series of facts, in the first ten centuries of Venetian history, as we think will exhibit a comprehensive view of the stages by which Democracy gradually dwindled into hereditary Aristocracy; and that, in its turn, into a mysterious and unrelenting Oligarchy.

The small band of fugitives, who, escaping from the devastations of the Goths, first peopled the lagunes of the Adriatic Gulf, (A.D. 420,) were governed by magistrates sent from Padua. The names and posterity of some of these men are not yet extinct. Antonio *Calvo*, Alberto *Faliero*, Tomaso *Candiano*, Albino *Moro*, Hugo *Fosco*, Cesare *Danlo*.* From the four first sprang the patrician families of the *Calvi*, *Candiani*, *Moro*, and *Falieri*, which were in existence up to the time of the destruction of the republic. From the fifth, the *Foscolo*, *Foscari*, and *Foscarini* derived their origin; and *Danlo* is thought to have been the parent stem of the house of *Dandolo*.

In the lagunes, which are navigable at high water, but are left partially dry in the ebb, the fugitives found numerous spots, amid the rocks and little islands, sufficiently extensive to admit of cultivation. Their natural produce and aliment was, however, fish; and their only marketable commodities, the salt which they collected in their lagunes, and the fish which they cured with it. Their occupations consisted in building and navigating small boats for their neighbours. Such was their first acquaintance with that element which was afterwards to bear the proud fleets of their daring navigators, victorious warriors, and enterprising merchants. The greater number of the islands were marshes. The most elevated of them, called Rialto, was situated nearly in the middle. In progress of time, several of them were united by bridges, and formed the site of the city of Venice.

Meanwhile, Padua was still the metropolis; but having being shortly after devastated by the incursions of barbarians, (A.D. 450—60,) her little colonies were emancipated from her guardianship, and left to maintain as they could their feeble independence. From that time, each island elected a tribune; and it appears that the assembly of these magistrates constituted a national council. But as the necessity of carrying on offensive and defensive wars with their neighbours increased, the executive power, not very precisely separated, indeed, from the legislative and judicial, was vested in a single tribune. (A.D. 503.) Though, however, this functionary was elective, and bound in most things by the deliberations and decrees of the other tribunes, his authority was too extensive to be viewed without jealousy and apprehension; and was soon distributed among ten, and afterwards among twelve—though occasionally this number was diminished to seven. They were chosen annually, and were bound to govern the republic with the concurrence of a popular assembly, and the assistance of a council of forty

* Daru, Hist. de Venice, Pièces Justif. section 6. vol. vii. p. 1.

persons, *both chosen by the people*, and who also performed the functions of judges.

This extremely pure Democracy lasted for more than two centuries and a half; when, as wealth and population increased, the offices of the magistracy naturally devolved upon those who possessed the influence of property in the highest degree; and as these were, of course, comparatively few in number, the abuse of power became less difficult. Hence arose dissensions among those who aspired to govern, intrigues in the annual elections, licentiousness among the people, and all the symptoms of impending civil war, at the very time when their struggles with external enemies imperiously demanded union and co-operation. In this emergency, they elected, for the first time, a chief Magistrate, called a Doge, who was to hold his office for life. (A.D. 697.) This title, which is a corruption of Dux, while it excluded the idea of Sovereignty, more peculiarly indicated the office of leader of the national armies. He was an object, however, of constant jealousy and vigilance to the existing magistrates, and especially to the council of forty, in which the seeds of the State Inquisition, though yet imperceptible on the surface, had taken firm root. Having thus provided a conductor of their wars abroad, and combined vigour in the government with security to popular rights at home, their determination never to yield even the shadow of their political independence acquired new strength.

There was not at that time a single prince in Europe, whether hereditary or elective, who could emancipate himself from vassalage to the Emperor, either of the East or of the West, or perhaps to both. Yet, at that very moment, Venice regarded the concessions made to her by both empires as rewards for her co-operation in their commercial and maritime expeditions, but never acknowledged them to be held at the pleasure of either emperor as feudal chief. All *her* historians treat this as a fundamental axiom of the law of nations; while foreign writers have denied it, and have contended that the right of the emperors to make or to recall grants is inalienable.

Charlemagne, indeed, affected to consider the Venetians as his feudal dependents; but either he wanted their assistance, or felt that he had not power to withhold what they demanded; for it is unquestionable, that he declared them independent.* Immediately after the establishment of his family on the throne of Italy, Pepin found a pretext for charging the Venetians with ingratitude, or disobedience, to the emperor, and attacked them with all his forces, and with the determination entirely to subdue them: but they repulsed his fleet, manned with the troops that had conquered the western empire, and thus put an end to all claims on their allegiance. We may advert hereafter to the pretensions of the Emperor of the East; but we shall now only say a word on the degree of obedience paid by Venice to the Ecclesiastical oracles of Rome.

‘The Doges were invested with power’ (we translate from Andrea Dandolo, who was himself a Doge, and the earliest of Venetian historians,) ‘of convoking assemblies; of declaring war, or concluding treaties; of commanding the armies of the state; of appointing the military tribunes and the judges; of hearing appeals, and deciding definitively on all matters at issue; of collecting the citizens in their different islands, and in the quarters or districts of Venice, for the

* Machiavelli. Storia. Lib. i.

‘ purpose of choosing their parish priests and bishops ; of judging all
 ‘ matters concerning the clergy, in causes as well civil as criminal,
 ‘ leaving to the pope the decision of such only as were purely spiritual ;
 ‘ lastly, of awarding ecclesiastical punishments, investing the bishops,
 ‘ and installing them in their churches. By the assertion of this latter
 ‘ right, however consonant at the time with the practice of the church
 ‘ of Rome, Venice involved herself afterwards in a struggle with the
 ‘ popes ; yet though this struggle was so fierce as sometimes to threaten
 ‘ her immediate destruction, and though every monarch successively
 ‘ yielded to the arrogant pretensions of the sovereign pontiffs, she never,
 ‘ through the whole period of her existence, permitted the court of
 ‘ Rome to interfere in the government of her church.’ *

Although invested with such vast powers, it does not appear that the first Doge abused them ; he advanced the glory and augmented the prosperity of the state, and died respected by his subjects. The second did little either for the advantage or injury of the republic. The third, availing himself of the pretext afforded him by a letter from the pope, requesting his aid against the Barbarians, made war upon the Lombards, besieged them in Ravenna, which they had occupied, and reconquered, and restored it to the Emperor of the East. As a reward for these services, he obtained for the republic a tract of land bordering on the sea, and extending to the Adige. But his successes against an enemy hitherto deemed invincible, and the magnificence which he affected after his return from this expedition, alarmed the jealousy of his countrymen, who foresaw a dictator in their victorious general. He was assassinated by the populace in his palace, and the dignity of Doge was abolished. (A. D. 737.)

In its stead was established the office of a chief, removable from year to year, with the title of *Maestro della Milizia*. Only four successive leaders enjoyed this dignity ; the fifth was imprisoned, his eyes were put out, and he was deposed. (A. D. 742.)

The Venetians then restored the office of Doge, which was, as before, elective, and held for life. Of forty-three who reigned in the course of three hundred years, scarcely one half concluded their career in peace. Five were compelled to abdicate, three were assassinated by conspirators, one was condemned to death according to legal forms, and nine sentenced to be deposed, and deprived of sight, or to exile, and sometimes to all these punishments united. Some only escaped them by dying on the field of battle. Yet few of them, if any, had brought any great calamity upon the republic, whilst many had extended her dominion and her fame, by the acquisition of extensive provinces on the Adriatic, and by planting some of those colonies in the Archipelago, which afterwards facilitated her conquests in the East, and aided the growth of her adventurous commerce.

The persecutions and punishments which followed every attempt, on the part of the Doges, to render the throne hereditary, and the judicial trial and execution by which the state repressed all schemes of personal ambition, afford the strongest proofs that the abhorrence of the Venetians for the government of one man continued unabated during

* Ejusque jussione (Ducis) clericorum consilia et electiones prælaturarum a Clero et Populo debeant inchoare, et electi ab eo (Duce) investitionem accipere, et ejus mandato inthronisari.—And. Dandolo, apud Gallicioli, chron. I.—Daru, Hist. vol. i. p. 42.

the first seven centuries of their political existence. The real depositary of the republican power was the council of forty. Like the Ephori of Sparta, they exercised directly but few of the functions of the executive — but they ruled over their kings. On the forty also devolved the sovereign power during the interregna; sometimes after the deposition or death of Doges, whom they themselves had tried and condemned. Thus slowly and imperceptibly arose that aristocratical domination which prepared the way for the silent usurpations of the oligarchy, and was at length matured into the tremendous despotism of the State Inquisition. A body of Magistrates, however, existed in Venice, at this period, whose functions were totally different from those of the Ephori, and were borrowed (if, indeed, they were imitated at all,) from those of the tribunes of the people in Rome. They were called *Avvogadore del Comun* — advocates of the Commonwealth. They were three in number; but the *Veto* of one of them was sufficient to suspend the execution of all sentences of the courts of justice, all decrees of the Doges, and all deliberations of the council of forty, or of the popular assemblies. The Avvogador assigned no reason for his *Veto* till the expiration of a month and a day, and might even twice extend this for a like period: he had then the privilege of appointing either the Doge or the Forty, or any other body of magistrates, or the assembly of the people, to decide exclusively on the validity of his reason.

It is manifest, therefore, that the preponderance of the Avvogadori was resistless, since they had only to avail themselves of the jealousies necessarily existing between the various bodies of the state, and select that one as their judge whose views and interests were opposed to the law or decree suspended by their *Veto*. They thus prevented the powers of the government from being concentrated in the hands of any one of those bodies. The name, the office, the dignity, and the functions of the Avvogadori were preserved in appearance until the total ruin of the republic. But their power of opposing either the introduction of monarchy, the usurpations of aristocracy, or the licentiousness of the people, although always admitted as a constitutional and inalienable right, had been long substantially annihilated by the State Inquisition. We shall see hereafter, that the fate of the council of forty was not very dissimilar; it was eventually bound in the chains forged for it by a magistracy which sprang from its own body. Thus were the various powers of the Doge, in whom resided the executive — of the forty, who possessed the legislative and the judicial — and of the Avvogadori, to whom was intrusted the guardianship of the popular rights, balanced according to that system which has been thought to be the contrivance of theoretical politicians. It is, however, far more probable that these checks grew out of the imperious necessity of circumstances, or out of those principles, or rather antipathies, which governed the people of Venice, than that they were formally instituted in imitation of the Republics of Greece or Rome, or in conformity to the speculations of theorists. Such speculations were, indeed, unknown to the age of which we are treating. But no human precautions, however wise, can avail against the slow but certain and irresistible influence of property. Wherever its possession has been confirmed by time, it becomes the surest basis of ambition, and at length bears down everything before it. The families which, for ages, had filled the civil and military offices of the state, while they continued to enrich themselves by commerce, had thus accumulated a stock of influence which

was transmitted, increased in every generation, from father to son. Hence arose that Aristocracy which is the result of no positive institutions, but the offspring of wealth rendered venerable by antiquity. It owes its birth and its duration to itself alone, nor can princes or people either establish or abolish it. At the epoch, however, under our consideration, an aristocracy of this nature, although it existed in Venice, did not constitute a distinct body, nor enjoy any exclusive right or privilege.

It formed, no doubt, the reigning class, because every people who have their government to form, and the power of choosing their governors, will prefer those who have most influence and power as individuals. The Roman people maintained a struggle for ages with the senate, for the right of electing plebeian consuls, yet, when they prevailed, they made no use of their power, but continued to choose them from among the patrician class.

In the meanwhile, the population of Venice increased ; her territorial sovereignty, although still confined within the boundaries of her own marshes in Italy, was extended, in other directions, by her conquests in the Mediterranean. These acquisitions whetted her eagerness for fresh expeditions, and drew her into long wars, which were fed by the fruits of her commerce. Her principal citizens were at once warlike and mercantile,—they commanded her fleets and her armies, and exercised vigilant control over their chief ; and while they thus acquired both glory and riches, they maintained the free constitution of the republic. The authority of the Doge, perilous and precarious as it always was, served to divert all popular jealousy from the powerful citizens, to whom it ought rather to have been directed. When the magistrates, who were generally selected from that class, sat in judgment on their prince, the dignity and the legal formality of their proceedings prevented the suspicion of corrupt designs,—especially as, in order to get rid of a dangerous responsibility, they usually contrived to have their sentences confirmed by the popular assemblies.

It does not appear, from any existing record, that the sanguinary tumults of the populace, who sometimes constituted themselves judges and executioners of their Doges, were ever punished. On some occasions, possibly, they were ; but it is probable that the number of the offenders afforded a reason, or a pretext, for granting impunity to all ; and yet more probable, that they had powerful accomplices in their judges.

In whatever degree personal hatred conspired to hurl one Doge after another from the throne, the frequency of the event clearly shows, that it could not have been disagreeable to that great aristocracy in whom the power of prevention or punishment was undoubtedly vested,—and that their connivance in these frequent assassinations was secured by their design of availing themselves of these scenes of lawlessness and bloodshed as a pretext for abolishing the popular election of the chief magistrate, who was thus summarily disposed of by his constituents. Sometimes the people deposed a Doge whom, but a month before, they had chosen by acclamation ; he was sent into exile, and a successor appointed, who, in his turn, was deposed or assassinated, and the exile recalled to the throne, only, perhaps, like Peter Candiano, to be again hurled from it after a few years of power, and murdered by the populace.

The effects of liberty like this now began to be dreaded by that class of citizens who are neither the mighty nor the mob, but who, in

Venice, were numerous, and rich in that sort of property which is the best adapted for the purposes of commerce, and the most obnoxious to pillage. In them the antient families found allies interested in curbing this popular license ; but they availed themselves of their co-operation only so far as they found it absolutely necessary. The remote, but inevitable effect of the alterations which they subsequently introduced into the constitution, was the total exclusion, not only of the lower, but of the middle classes, from every office in the state, and from every political right.

They had already provided, that the council of forty, upon whom, as we have seen, devolved the sovereign authority during the interregna, might appoint a Doge in cases of extraordinary urgency. The state might otherwise have been kept, for an indefinite length of time, without a chief magistrate, by the dissensions between the partisans of the different candidates. The popular assembly might afterwards confirm this nomination, or might proceed to another election. The fit time for beginning to reduce an occasional example into a constant practice appeared to have arrived when the last of the forty-three Doges above mentioned was assassinated, and his death succeeded by popular commotions. (A.D. 1172.) Eleven individuals, deputed by the council of forty, then elected a Doge, upon condition that he should ratify a new constitution, the provisions of which were,—That the people should have the right of confirming or annulling the elections of the Doges, *but not the power of electing them*.—That the Doge should henceforth have no power to choose his own councillors, but that six individuals should be associated with him, subject, however, to his control, who should form an integral part of the supreme magistracy, and without whose concurrence none of his decrees should be valid. (This council, enlarged in process of time by ministers subsequently introduced, and by the heads of other branches of the magistracy, was called *The Signoria*.) — That whenever he might stand in need of a larger number of councillors, he should not, as formerly, request the assistance of those citizens whom he thought most capable of advising him, but should consult the forty, to whom were to be added sixty other individuals. These afterwards constituted the body called, in later times, *The Senate*, while its meetings retained the antient name of *Pregadi*, from the very remote usage of requesting (*pregare*) the citizens to deliberate on affairs of state.—That *the people should no longer hold meetings*, but should delegate the exercise of all their rights to 470 citizens, who should form a body from which should emanate every act relating to the sovereignty. (This was, both then and thereafter, called the Great Council.)—That the members of the Great Council, though liable to be displaced by the people, should not be chosen by them, but by twelve individuals selected from among the inhabitants of the city of Venice. From these twelve, therefore, virtually emanated all the powers and offices of the Republic ; and as a large majority of them necessarily belonged to that class which had most influence, either from office, from antiquity of descent, or wealth, it was plainly to be expected that, in one way or other, they should consult the interest of the Aristocracy in their choice of the 470 who were to represent the nation.

The large number of representatives elected by the capital alone, and the exclusion of the inhabitants of the surrounding islands, who had, till then, formed an integral part of the Republic, and taken a share in the popular meetings, rendered the new constitution less dis-

tasteful than it would have otherwise been to the people of Venice. But while they rejoiced at seeing those who had been their partners in sovereignty reduced to the condition of their slaves, they seem not to have perceived that they had themselves lost every political right transmitted to them by their ancestors.

The first Doge elected in virtue of this constitution (1172) refused the office ; but it was not difficult to find another who accepted it. He was carried in procession through the city, seated on a throne, and introduced the custom, ever after observed, of throwing gold and silver to the populace. So ready are men to sell their rights, and to admire, as munificent liberality, that despicable bribe, which they are always willing to receive as the price of their freedom. But still the aristocracy, though it reduced the people to slavery, had not yet secured to itself a constitutional and stable authority.

Meanwhile the prosperity of the Republic, the glories of her victories, and the extent of her conquests, were constantly increasing. The silken stuffs, the Tyrian purple, the plumes, the Oriental luxuries, which the historian Eginhard, (*Annales Francorum*), in the time of Charlemagne, saw conveyed by the Venetians from the Ports of Syria and the Black Sea, were gradually emulated in Venice, and spreading over the north and the west, created new wants throughout Europe, and rendered the whole continent tributary to the nation who had it in her power to supply them. Her manufactures assumed a more enterprising character, and prospered by the aid of her commerce, which, in spite of the rivalry of the other Italian states, succeeded in obtaining possession of almost all the ports of the Mediterranean. Lastly, with an ambition of adorning Venice, and augmenting her splendour, her warrior-merchants brought from Greece fragments and models of antient architecture, and precious remains, which, although at that time unskilfully applied, served to awaken the genius of those artists who, at a later period, embellished their city with edifices of wonderful beauty. The new constitution was established just about the time when Gregory VII. was meditating the Crusades. His design of leading expeditions from all the nations of the West, to carry on religious wars against the East, was, soon after his death, put in execution, and prosecuted through a century and a half, by a series of succeeding popes. The greater number of the vessels required by the kings and the armies of the crusaders were furnished at a high rate by the Venetians ; and the large proportion they engrossed of that commerce of which Europe knew not the value, increased their opulence, and their influence over greater empires. Though they never admitted that they owed vassalage to the Emperor of the East, they were, at first, faithful and zealous auxiliaries in his wars in Italy, — afterwards, powerful allies, — and, at length, they disposed of the throne of Byzantium, and aggrandized themselves with her spoils. The Doge, Henry Dandolo, was indisputably the most powerful of the three confederate princes who conquered Constantinople at the beginning of the thirteenth century. But although others have ascribed his rejection of the imperial crown to magnanimity, it is unquestionable that, if he had accepted it, his generals would have soon struck it to the ground, together with the head which bore it. They would thus have been guided by the two animating principles of the Republic, — resistance to the government of a monarch, and determination never to be connected, in any manner whatsoever, with the political interests of foreigners.

Dandolo, however, took advantage of his preponderance in this great confederation to extend the colonies and the power of his country, securing to her by treaty the most valuable of the dominions of the Eastern Empire in the Archipelago. (A.D. 1204.)

About this time the popes published bulls forbidding all commerce between Christians and Infidels as sacrilegious; they did not, however, refuse to grant indulgences (like the licenses for belligerent trade of later times) which sometimes enriched the Apostolic chamber with the sum of nine or ten thousand ducats of gold in a year. The Venetians thought themselves conscientiously justified, by the payment of so large a sum, in endeavours to form a treaty with the Caliphs of Egypt, in the name of the Lord God and of Mahomet.

Their trade, which had begun to extend into Arabia, and even India, inspired them with the project of getting possession of Egypt*, and opening a communication between the Nile and the Red Sea; ‘if they had accomplished this, (and they were at that time the only nation capable of undertaking it,)’ says one of their historians, ‘perhaps the trade to the East Indies would never have passed out of their hands.’

The maritime law of nations, at that epoch, barbarous as it appears to us, was not unknown; but it was, as it is now, and always will be, violated by all who can see a prospect of impunity joined to their own advantage. The merchants and navigators of Venice swore, in the church of St. Sophia at Constantinople, to observe certain statutes which had been compiled at the command of a King of Arragon, under the title of *Consolato del Mare*. The new laws, which experience, and the disputes incessantly arising among the maritime states, afterwards suggested, chiefly emanated from Venice, where, before the end of the thirteenth century, they were consolidated into a code. Such was the origin of the principles of the common maritime law, which, like every other international law, was unknown to the Greeks and Romans. It was amplified by the Venetians, and was observed by them during those very short intervals of peace in which they recruited their strength, that they might afterwards renew those implacable wars which they waged with the Sicilians, Pisans, and Genoese, in support of their claims to the dominion of the Mediterranean. But in the Adriatic, they had decided the contest by arms two or three centuries before. Although that gulf washed the shores of various states, those of the church among the number, not one of them dared to navigate it, or even to fish in its waters, without a license from Venice, for which they paid heavy tribute. ‘That sea is ours,’ replied they drily to the popes, who asked by what right they pretended to domineer there.

The contests between the successors of St. Peter, and of Cæsar, in the twelfth century, had the effect of converting the usurped power of the Republic into possession, legalized and consecrated by the Shepherd of the Faithful. Alexander III., when fleeing from Rome, found a refuge in Venice from the arms of Frederic Barbarossa, until the terrors of excommunication compelled the emperor to repair thither and prostrate himself at his feet. The pope, as a mark of his gratitude, solemnly presented the Doge with a ring in the cathedral, and accompanied his gift with these words: ‘Receive this as an earnest of the empire of the sea, and marry her to thee every year, in order that posterity may know, that she is under thy jurisdiction by right of

* *Gesta Dei per Francos*, in the part called *Secreta Fidelium*.

‘ conquest, and that I consecrate the same to thee, placing her under thy dominion, as I would subject a wife to that of her husband.’ The validity of this donation, though made by a pope, was disputed at the time, and the controversy was protracted through many centuries — a controversy not unlike that which is still agitated, with regard to the same subject, among more powerful nations, and which nothing but the right of the strongest is competent to decide. From that time the Doges annually wedded the Adriatic; and a custom, which appears ludicrous to us, was looked upon as sacred, and was productive of important consequences in that and many succeeding ages.

In the wars between the Empire and the Church, the Venetians took part only indirectly, and no farther than was necessary to keep in check whichever of the two should ultimately preponderate. The son of the Doge, Tiepolo, went to the assistance of the Milanese against Frederic II., when he was taken prisoner by Ezzelino, and sent to the emperor, who caused him to be beheaded; yet the Republic did not protest against so great an insult to its dignity. This gallant youth had fought as a volunteer, and suffered for his generosity; but the interest of Venice then required that a member of the house of France should not fill the throne of Naples, and that the house of Suabia, which had become the less formidable of the two, should continue to reign. She, therefore, sent a fleet against Charles of Anjou, although his competitor, Conrad, was excommunicated by the pope. (A.D. 1240—1260.)

The Venetians had not, at this time, a foot of land on *terra firma*. Their first acquisition was Arvia in Romagna, which, although even the emperors regarded it as appertaining to the church, they nevertheless usurped, or, in the specious phrase wherewith such injustice has ever been coloured, took under their special protection. The captains-general of the papal armies were dignitaries of the church; but the Venetians gave no quarter to armed priests; and having taken a prisoner on the shore of Agirileja, distinguished by the badge of the crosier, the sceptre, and the sword, they condemned him to ride backwards on a mule, holding the tail for a bridle, and preceded by the common crier, who proclaimed before him, ‘ Behold the wicked priest, who displeased God in his life, and was taken in iniquity.’ (A.D. 1274.)

At this period the feud between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines, which raged with the greatest fury throughout Italy, found its way into Venice, and afforded the more powerful of its inhabitants an occasion for making themselves masters of the state, and transmitting it as a patrimony to their descendants, up to the period when its ruin was consummated. We have already seen that this revolution, in favour of an aristocracy, originally personal and elective, and constitutionally dependent on the body of the people, but which afterwards became absolute sovereign of the nation, grasping the whole power of the state, and perpetuated it in certain families, had been preparing, through a long course of ages, partly by circumstances, but more by men, who were possessed of the power arising from property, and the perseverance requisite to turn it to account.

This revolution, however, unlike most others, neither rushed to its conclusion with precipitate speed, nor was brought about by any sudden catastrophe; but proceeding by gradual and silent encroachment, it so engrafted itself on the trunk of the constitution, that though its fruits were somewhat different to the eye, the plant itself did not appear to have changed its nature. The illusion was the more easily practised,

as the Venetian writers, beginning by the Doge, Andrea Dandolo, the first historian of his country, have all, up to the present day, concurred in asserting, or at least in suffering it to be believed, that the change of which we have been speaking was not imposed upon an unwilling people, but accomplished in full accordance with their inclinations; that the aristocracy employed neither force nor stratagem, and that, so far from any civil dissensions having raged in Venice, the Guelf and Ghibelline factions were scarcely known there, even by name. Yet, so far is this from being the truth, that not only did the opinions and the animosities of these conflicting parties find their way into the city, but fermented there to such a degree as to produce a political crisis which we shall now pause for a moment to consider. We are induced to notice this more particularly, because it has never yet been investigated, and because it forms an era which gives a new aspect to the history of the republic down to the hour of her dissolution.

The examples of democratical government, which many of the Italian states afforded, and of which the Guelfs were strenuous partisans, recalled to the people of Venice the remembrance of their antient rights; the rather as two generations had not passed away since the aristocracy had framed a constitution which, as we have just seen, reduced the sovereignty of the people to a shadow, and their privileges to a dead letter; and such, perhaps, are the consequences to which the rights of property inevitably lead. Such were the consequences even in Florence, the most popular of the states of that age. The Guelfs, for the most part, belonged not to the mass of the people, but were men who, emboldened by the acquisition of moderate wealth, and of the influence consequent upon it, aspired, first, to participate in the government, and, eventually, to wrest it from those who had long held possession of it; while those whose claims to power had acquired some antiquity were in their turn assailed by competitors whose riches were of later acquisition. The struggle, therefore, in Venice, lay between such of the middle class as had recently risen to opulence, and the more powerful of the older proprietors. The people were the blind and wretched instruments of both. Owing to the commercial character of the Italian states, the contests between them were the more frequent; whilst, from the same cause, wealth accumulated with astonishing rapidity in the hands of individuals and families, whose only original patrimony had been a fearless spirit of enterprise and persevering industry. This was more peculiarly the case in Venice, whose institutions all tended to encourage manufactures, navigation, and commerce. We shall shortly have occasion to advert to certain of her laws, which were calculated to give an extraordinary stimulus to commerce, though it would probably be impossible to imitate them at the present time. We may add, that when the antient families aspired to the acquisition of greater distinction, by the possession of territorial property in their Greek colonies, they began to disdain trade as a sordid pursuit; and although this process was exceedingly slow, it was yet sufficient to open all the avenues of commercial opulence to their humbler fellow-citizens.

As the latter rose to wealth, they naturally aspired to the guidance of the democratical spirit which, at that time, pervaded Italy, and sought to restore the old freedom of election, and the popular assemblies. For this purpose, they took advantage of the discontents of the poorer classes, who were burdened with fresh taxes for the support of

the war with Genoa, which, with increased fury, and more doubtful success, then raged in almost every part of the Mediterranean.

Opinions,—political opinions more especially, which have their source in our physical wants, soon kindle into passions. It was, therefore, no difficult task to spread them, with all the force of indisputable demonstrations, among the multitude, by whom there is little hope of their ever being understood, and still less of their being rightly applied. In this state of the public mind, the personal animosities of a few individuals grasp at every indication of popular tumult, in the hope of finding, either in the multitude or the government, a powerful confederate. Private feuds thus assumed the aspect, the character, and the weapons of civil war. Examples of this were numerous throughout Italy, but more particularly in Tuscany; and perhaps, to go farther back, Rome herself owed her republican government to the foolish vanity of Collatinus, in boasting of his wife's beauty, and thus awakening the brutal passions of Tarquin.

Giacomo Tiepolo, and Giovanni Dandolo, both sprung of very antient families,—both illustrious for their military exploits and magisterial dignities,—both numbering many Doges among their ancestry,—quarrelled, even to the shedding of blood. Tiepolo openly professed himself a champion of the aristocracy of birth, while Dandolo was the advocate of popular liberties, and of the admissibility to the offices of government of every man, without distinction, who possessed the requisite means and capacity. The reigning party was thus placed in a situation of the utmost difficulty. On the one side it had to fear the revival of the antient democratical institutions; and on the other, the necessity of committing the defence of its own privileges to a leader in whose hands victory would leave the means of rendering himself sole and absolute master of the state.

The council of forty, which, as we have seen, was almost co-eval with the foundation of Venice, and which was invested with such large powers during the interregna between the death of one Doge and the installation of his successor, had frequently exercised the right (afterwards committed to a body of magistrates called the *Correttori*) of modifying such laws as experience had shown to be either injurious or inefficient. But, while they only modified them in appearance, they often entirely altered their substance. This they had not hesitated to do a century before, in regard to those which regulated the elections of the Doges. To these laws they now recurred with greater caution, as well adapted to further their design of causing the chief magistracy to devolve upon individuals in whom the popular party could not possibly find a head recognised or sanctioned by the constitution; and to whom the aristocracy might commit their cause, and the weapons necessary to its security and triumph, with little apprehension of their being betrayed or abused.

They, therefore, devised a new mode of electing the head of the government—a mode which remained unchanged up to the final extinction of the Republic. It was marked by peculiarities which it would require a considerable detail to explain, and which we should despair even then of making intelligible, without the help of a diagram;—an expedient to which some Venetian historians, and, more recently, M. Daru, have actually had recourse. But as we can only afford to give a very brief account of this singular process, we shall merely say that it required that a number of electors, amounting sometimes to

forty, should be *five times* indicated by chance ; after which, they were to be individually subjected, an equal number of times, to a scrutiny, by which most of them were excluded, in order that their names might be replaced by others also drawn by lot. The whole were then subjected to the most rigid examination, in order that those who were eventually retained as electors might be such as were thoroughly acquainted with that precise combination of qualities, which the circumstances of the time, and the views of the ruling party, required in a Doge.

These complicated forms were admirably calculated at once to bewilder the people, and to lead them to imagine that individual interest and design were baffled by the impartial decrees of fate, while, in their turn, they exercised just that degree of control over fortune necessary to secure the Republic against her blind and wayward caprices. At the same time, to guard against the possibility of either the Doge or any other man in power having any community of interest, or the slightest intercourse with, or dependence upon, any of the neighbouring states, some of which were under a democratical, and others under a despotic form of government, they enacted three laws : *First*, That the Doge should not marry any woman not a native of Venice. This remained ever after inviolate and unchanged. *Secondly*, That no Venetian should serve any foreign prince, either in war or peace. This, so far as patri-cians were concerned, was also rigorously observed, and the violation of it inexorably punished ; up to the latest period of the Republic, if they quitted her territory without permission, they inevitably incurred a sentence of perpetual banishment, nor could this permission be even asked without exciting suspicion. With regard to individuals of humbler rank, unless they held some office under the government, this law fell into disuse. The great difficulty was to prevent the sons of noble families from going to take holy orders at Rome, where they might accept ecclesiastical dignities from the pope, and might thence fall under suspicions from which no degree of merit could shelter them. We have already mentioned the example of Cardinal Bembo, and should our subsequent observations follow the current of events to the close of Venetian history, we shall have occasion to notice instances yet more remarkable of this jealousy of the ecclesiastical power. Even before the introduction of this law, no member of the aristocracy, though as yet not hereditary, was permitted to form any private connexion with foreigners. A young lady of the Morosini family, at the period of which we are treating, was demanded in marriage by the King of Hungary. Before the government would permit the father to enter on the negotiation, it compelled him to renounce all his paternal rights, adopted the girl as daughter of the Republic, and, in that character, bestowed her on her royal suitor. The *Third* of these new laws decreed, That no Venetian should possess landed property on the continent of Italy. For a time this was enforced, since, with the exception of a few sterile stripes of the shore of the Adriatic, the government itself had none. The princely domains of the antient families accordingly were all situated in the colonies, while commerce, which they had not yet learned to despise, was continually adding to their wealth. But in process of time, as they lost their colonies, and extended their conquests in Italy, they admitted the most powerful families of the conquered cities into the body of the Venetian aristocracy ; and this law was, in consequence, tacitly abolished.

As these enactments first presented themselves to the minds of the reigning party as means of avoiding the opposite dangers, — of the revival of popular rights, on the one hand, and, on the other, of the introduction of monarchy, — very few years elapsed from their first suggestion to their final and complete adoption. (A.D. 1275.) However indirect and informal might be their origin, it is unquestionable that they were no sooner introduced than they acquired stability and authority; and that they excited no suspicions in the nation, because they arose directly out of the two original and vital principles of every modification of Venetian government, and fell in with sentiments which appeared to be the indigenous growth of every Venetian bosom. These were complete national independence, and hatred of a domestic dictatorship. The Venetian legislators, therefore, were so far from dissembling their determination to repress at home the growth of those factions which divided the rest of Italy, that they loudly avowed it, and found in that avowal a sure means of acquiring popularity. It was, indeed, impossible to distort, and needless to demonstrate, the truth of those facts of which every man was a spectator. It was sufficient to warn the Venetians, — that the Guelfs throughout Italy were merely the instruments of the popes, who fostered their rebellion against the Emperors, by absolving them from their allegiance, — incited them to form themselves into democracies, and then domineered over them at their pleasure, and gifted them away as rewards, to those foreign princes who allied themselves with the church. That the Ghibellines, on the other hand, consisted of a feudal aristocracy, who, while they professed to uphold the rights of the empire, combated, in fact, for the lordship of their several cities; till, at length, they, together with their subjects, fell into the ferocious grasp of a military despot; some one, probably, of their own fellow-citizens, decorated with the title of Vicar-Imperial, and rendered independent of all the laws or constitutions of the city he governed.

Nevertheless the popular party, composed of a great number of families newly risen to opulence, and still in contact with the mass of the people, under the guidance of Giovanni Dandolo, gradually increased in strength and influence. Whether it was, that the opinions held by this party had also insinuated themselves among the aristocracy, which was not, as yet, hereditary, and which began to feel the pressure of that oligarchy which already gave indications of its ambitious and domineering views, — or whether it was the work of chance, which sometimes baffles all human precautions, — Dandolo was elected Doge, by means of those complicated enactments which had recently been framed for the express purpose of excluding men holding such opinions, and with so religious an observance of all the forms and scrutinies required, that the ruling party could not, without a direct violation of its own laws, prevent his ascending the ducal throne. (A.D. 1280.) Without, therefore, making the least show of resistance, they endeavoured to sound the public mind, and to ascertain what degree of opposition they had to expect. They then proposed, with a view to amend and consolidate the constitution: — That thenceforward, no one should be admitted to the sittings of the Great Council, (the depository of the sovereign power, and the body from which all legislative acts emanated, and all the individuals who were called to exercise magisterial offices were selected,) except those who had formerly had seats there, or who could at least prove that their father, grandfather, or great-grandfather

had enjoyed that distinction. Dandolo opposed the introduction of this law with such spirit and effect, that the Great Council rejected it, though interested in its adoption.

Whether it was the intention of this Doge merely to arrest the progress of aristocratical usurpation, or to restore their antient rights to the people, nowhere distinctly appears ; though the latter is the more probable conjecture. Such, however, were the straits to which he was reduced by a nine years' contest with the church, in order to deprive her of her partisans in the bosom of the republic, that he at last found himself compelled to seek the support of the aristocratical party.

The church having taken upon itself to give the kingdom of Naples to Charles of Anjou, Martin IV. proclaimed a crusade against the lawful heir ; and because the Venetian government would not allow its subjects to take arms in the enterprise, and thus to open Italy to French invasion, he launched an excommunication against them, and interdicted the celebration of religious rites within their territory. For three years, during which the Republic submitted in silence, no priests officiated at her altars, nor were prayers or offerings presented in her churches. Martin's successor removed the interdict ; but on condition that the Holy Inquisition, whose introduction the Venetians had hitherto resisted, should be admitted and established in perpetuity. (A.D. 1286.)

This institution, ostensibly established for the preservation of the faith, had been long used by the popes as an instrument for forwarding their political designs, and, in the several Italian states, aided the leaders of the Guelf party, not only with counsels and directions, but often with more substantial assistance. The Venetians had undertaken to provide for the punishment of heretics, and to preserve the purity of the faith, but they always treated ecclesiastics as subject to the government of the state, and as essentially incapable of exercising temporal powers. After a negotiation protracted through the reigns of ten successive popes, the Republic and the Holy See concluded the following treaty, in the reign of Honorius IV. : That three ecclesiastical judges should take cognizance of Heresy throughout the Venetian territory, subject, however, to the control of magistrates chosen by the Great Council ; that one of them should be the Bishop of Venice, a natural subject of the Republic ; another, a brother of the order of St. Dominic : but that notwithstanding the authority they derived from the pope, neither of them should take his seat in the tribunal without a commission signed by the Doge. The remaining office was to be filled by the apostolic nuncio. By the terms of the treaty, their jurisdiction was limited to heretics ; a description, however, which, it was provided, should not be extended to Jews or Turks, as having never belonged to the Church of Christ, — nor to members of the Greek church, inasmuch as its controversy with the church of Rome was still undecided, so that the Holy Office would be at once judge and party ; — nor to bigamists, because, the second marriage being virtually null, the offence was to be considered as a violation, not of a sacrament, but of a civil obligation ; — nor to blasphemers, because they were guilty, not of innovation or schism, but of want of reverence for religion ; — nor to usurers, because, though they violated its precepts, they did not dispute its dogmas ; — nor to witches or magicians, unless they had abused the holy sacrament to the purposes of their diabolical art.

Such was the first treaty concluded by Venice with the then omnipotent Vatican. We should have contented ourselves with a bare

mention of it, were it not more closely connected than may at first sight appear with the constitution of the Republic, and calculated to suggest important reflections upon the history of the period under review. How strong must have been the aversion of the Venetian people to foreign interference, when it could get the better, even to this extent, of that imperious superstition which had crushed the liberties of other communities, reduced their rulers to vassalage, and subjugated the reason of mankind ! What must have been the resources and the spirit of the Republic, when she could venture to withstand a power deemed irresistible by her contemporaries, and that in the teeth of the many and obstinate contests in which she was likely to be involved. For it must be remembered, that the popes of that and the preceding age had compelled a king of England to acknowledge himself a vassal of the Holy See ; had so wrought upon the superstitious weakness of Louis IX. of France, who was ambitious of the title of saint, that he led the flower of his subjects to perish by disease or the sword in the burning climate of Syria ; had sanctioned the judicial assassination of the lawful heir to the throne of Naples ; had commissioned their dependent bishops to discover the ashes of a son of Frederic II., disinter them, and scatter them, with curses, to the winds ; and had illuminated the civil tumults and massacres of Italy with the horrid light of human victims, sacrificed to the intrigues of the Holy Office. So remorseless, so unblushing had been their cruelty, that, at the beginning of the following century, Benedict XI., though himself a member of the atrocious order of St. Dominic, contemplated it with shame and horror, and endeavoured, though in vain, to set some bounds to the insatiate appetite of his brethren for human blood.* We think, too, that on comparing the liberal and enlightened opinions which now prevail on the subject of religious toleration with the arguments assigned in the Venetian treaty in favour of infidels, Jews, and schismatics of the Greek church, it will appear that the Venetians were in advance of most of their contemporaries, and that some rays of light had broken upon them through the darkness and barbarism by which they were surrounded.

Hardly had the treaty to which we have adverted produced some suspension of the contests with the Holy See, which had been protracted through the whole of his reign, than Dandolo died. But, that he had never deserted the cause of the people, and that he intended to restore the rights they had lost, or at least to establish and secure the few which they still retained, appears indisputable, from his anxiety to adjust his personal differences with Giacomo Tiepolo, the champion of the aristocracy, and to detach him from that faction, by pointing him out to the choice of his own partisans, as his successor in the throne. Such was the influence of Dandolo's measures, that while his body was carried to the tomb, a multitude, instigated and guided by nearly all the wealthy and influential persons of the middling class, and by some men of old family, distinctly proclaimed the names of the powerful oligarchs, who domineered over the elective aristocracy, loudly accused them of tyranny, enumerated their crimes, and, amid execrations on them all, elected Giacomo Tiepolo by acclamation. (A.D. 1289.) At this moment, as is justly remarked by M. Daru, Venice seemed to be on the eve of recovering her popular rights, or

* The Monition of this Pope, addressed to the Brethren of the Inquisition, is given by the Abbate Marini, in his work *Degli Archiatri Pontificj*. A. D. 1304.

of falling under the government of a single man, and, we may add, of being torn by that civil discord which then devastated the rest of Italy.

The oligarchy, though alarmed, affected not to see their danger. They offered no open resistance; but, without either confirming or annulling the election of the people, without even appearing to know that it had taken place, quietly proceeded to appoint a Doge, with all the prescribed formalities; thus availing themselves of the labyrinth of lots and scrutinies to conceal the name of the individual whom they had already determined to elect. Giacomo Tiepolo, alarmed perhaps rather by the calm and dignified attitude they assumed at so perilous a juncture, than by the difficulties of his own situation, fled by night, and renounced a throne which had been filled by many of his progenitors, together with his country, from which he thus became a voluntary exile for life. Those whose imaginations are peculiarly sensible to the dangers of revolutionary enterprises, will attribute this conduct of Tiepolo to pusillanimity; while those who think there is no sacrifice which a generous man will not make to preserve his country from civil war, will ascribe it to magnanimity.

While the citizens and the multitude looked around in vain for a leader, the aristocratical faction felt the necessity of placing a man of courage and decision at their head, and, for once, departed from their custom of raising age and decrepitude to the ducal throne. They elected Pietro Gradenigo, who united the advantages of very antient family and high military reputation, to an inflexible temper and the full vigour and fervour of youth. He had the command of some galleys on the coast of Istria, when he received orders to return to the capital. He landed from his flag-ship in triumph, and was hailed by the aristocracy as the victorious champion of their cause. The right which the people still retained of confirming the election of the head of the Republic was not formally abrogated, but was thenceforward in substance abolished. One of the electors advanced to a window of the palace, and proclaimed to the people, ‘*The Doge is elected, if you approve him;*’ and then, without waiting for an answer, retired.

Gradenigo ascended the throne with the resolute determination to found an Hereditary Aristocracy, or to perish in the attempt. His success was the more complete, that his conduct was watched and restrained by the Oligarchy; who feared, on the one hand, that he might aspire to the dictatorship, and, on the other, that he might ruin their designs by his intemperate ardour. By repeated and cautious experiments, by councils and designs, matured through a period of seven years, they learned to seize on every opportunity afforded by the succeeding twenty of reducing the Republic to a lower state of servitude than, probably, they themselves had ever ventured to anticipate.

They began by proposing again the law, which had been effectually resisted by Dandolo, excluding all from the Great Council except such as had already held a seat there, or whose fathers, grandfathers, or great grandfathers, had been members of that assembly. This law was afterwards farther modified, so as to restrict the privilege to those who had already had a seat in the Great Council for four years. It subjected them to be annually ballotted for by the council of forty, where twelve votes against twenty-eight were sufficient to ensure their re-election; and consequently, although they appeared to be elected

from year to year, they were, in fact, with very few exceptions, seated for life. (A.D. 1296.)

Shortly after, a law was introduced, excluding from a seat in the Great Council all men who had recently risen to opulence, and who were therein first openly described as *uomini nuovi*. (A.D. 1300.)

These important and vital alterations in the constitution were now directly subservient to the interests of those who were almost exclusively invested with the power of making them, and were, consequently, effected without serious opposition.

We have already remarked, that all the Venetian historians, without exception, conceal or misrepresent the occurrences of this period; nor are we enabled to correct their errors, or to supply their deficiencies, by the writers of other Italian states, who were too much occupied with the affairs and the discords of their own cities, to give more than a few meagre details concerning Venice. It appears, however, that the new laws were not promulgated without bloodshed; and we are probably safe in conjecturing, that the acquiescence of the people was the effect of terror, and not of indifference or approbation.

Besides those massacres which, from the fewness or obscurity of the victims, were little known at the time they occurred, and of which nothing more than vague and indistinct rumours have come down to us, others, so sanguinary as to force themselves upon the notice of the historians of Venice, prove, that long and increasing servitude had not yet subdued the national spirit into patient resignation to the last fatal blow which extinguished its liberties.

Two conspiracies broke out within two days of the proposal and adoption of the law, which Gradenigo, after placing the Great Council exclusively in the hands of the antient families, caused to be received as a fundamental statute of the republic:—That no one should henceforward be elected nor eligible to sit in the Great Council, except those who were then members of it, or their descendants: that this privilege should be Hereditary in their families in perpetuity: that the Great Council should be the sovereign power of the state, and that it should elect all the magistrates from among its own body. The Great Council, at that time, consisted of about six hundred members. (A.D. 1309.)

From this point we may date the second period in the history of the Republic, which ended only with the fall of its power. We shall find it totally unlike the former—rather, however, in its substantial effects, than in its external appearances. To us, contemplating, within the space of a few pages, the steps of this mighty change, the contrast between the earlier character of the government, and that which it bore till its dissolution, appears immense. When, however, we reflect, that this revolution was the result of changes so slow as to be almost imperceptible—changes tending to one conclusion, through a long course of ages, by the very nature of human society—we shall perceive that the nation was scarcely aware of them until it was too late to repair the evil, and that familiarity with slavery, and forgetfulness of obsolete rights, gradually prepared it for deeper degradation. The revolution which we have now endeavoured to trace, unexampled for the skilful combination of its causes, and the permanence of its effects, was conducted in the arbitrary spirit of oligarchy, under the mask of republican equality—with premeditated iniquity, under the

forms of justice — with a discretion which presented no front to its adversaries, but rather appeared to shrink from danger, and thus lulled suspicion, whilst it secretly extended and increased its powers. When, therefore, the moment arrived in which the aristocracy of Venice established itself in the undisputed and permanent possession of Hereditary authority, the conspiracies formed against it served but to increase its strength, and to arm it with new terrors.

The first of these conspiracies originated with a portion of the people, guided by certain citizens distinguished for courage and for opulence. Their vengeance was directed against Gradenigo. Their designs were no sooner discovered than defeated; and, after a few hours spent in legal forms, they were all delivered into the hands of the executioner. A conspiracy more formidable in its elements, and more secret in its operations, was next formed by veteran soldiers, under the conduct of patricians of antient family, at the head of whom was Bagamonte Tiepolo. The Doge, though almost entirely unprepared, collected all the disciplined troops within his reach. They were fewer in number, but had the advantage of not being intermixed with the mob, who, hastening to take part with the conspirators, brought confusion, panic, and flight into their ranks. The followers of Tiepolo, believing themselves betrayed on both sides, abandoned their chief, who perished by a blow from a stone thrown from a window by an old woman. His associates were all taken, and were branded with the name, and punished with the death, of traitors.

Shortly after this event, Gradenigo suddenly died in the full vigour of manhood, and not without suspicion of poison; a suspicion strengthened by the manifest danger to aristocratical ascendancy from his ambitious and enterprising character. He had already betrayed his secret designs by his endeavours to ingratiate himself with the people. In accordance with their wishes, he had permitted the Republic to extend her conquests, for the first time, on the continent of Italy, and forcibly to withstand the political interference of the popes in the affairs of other states.

Azzo of Este, Marquis of Ferrara, died, leaving a brother and a natural son, the latter of whom had attempted to murder his father, and had actually wounded him; but, as his mother was a native of Venice, the Republic, in spite of the opposition of the Ferrarese, recognised his claim to the marquisate, and his right to dispose of it, to the total exclusion of the lawful heir; after which they purchased it of him for an annuity of a thousand ducats, to be paid him during his life, and immediately sent an army to occupy the territory. Clement V., insisting upon that feudal supremacy over Ferrara which his predecessors had ever laid claim to, — incited by that hatred to the Republic which he had inherited from them, — and eager to seize the opportunity of extending his temporal dominions, lent a favourable ear to the entreaties of the Ferrarese and of the rightful heir; insomuch, that he not only deputed apostolical nuncios to receive their oaths of allegiance, but threatened the Venetians with the visitation of those canonical penalties which the Church had denounced against usurpers. The Venetians, disregarding these threats, were immediately assailed with a papal bull, which denounced them as despoilers of St. Peter's patrimony, and infamous, even to the fourth generation; deprived them of their mercantile property in foreign ports, of the right of property at home, and of the power of testamentary disposition; declared their

goods and possessions the lawful prey of the first taker ; themselves slaves in every region of the globe ; and proclaimed that God would look with an approving eye upon every act of hostility, cruelty, and perfidy which should tend to blot themselves and their posterity from the memory of mankind.* Such decrees were then believed to proceed from the immediate inspiration of God ; and, sanctifying rapine, readily found executioners.

It is recorded, that a Venetian ambassador crawled on his hands and feet to the foot of the papal throne, — patiently endured the epithet of ‘ *soulless dog*,’ with which he was regaled by the consistory, and, by dint of much entreaty, at length obtained absolution for the Republic † ; which, however, be it remarked, she did not apply for until Ferrara had been wrested from her hands by a murderous insurrection of the inhabitants.

At this period begins the reign of the council of ten, which, in its origin, was nothing more than a committee of the council of forty, specially appointed, for the limited period of two months, to proceed judicially against those who were implicated in the conspiracy of Bajamonte Tiepolo, and to explore its secret ramifications. (A.D. 1310.) Afterwards, its powers were extended for a farther period of two months ; then for the successive periods of one, five, and ten years ; and, ultimately, it was established in perpetuity, with ample authority to make, alter, and repeal the regulations which were to govern its procedure and its judgments. (A.D. 1335.) It had hardly received this extension of its powers, when it carried them into decisive effect, for the purpose of suppressing the last fruitless attempt on the domination of the hereditary aristocracy. The attempt to which we advert is the celebrated conspiracy of the Doge Falier, whom they had placed in the ducal throne at the advanced age of eighty, to obviate the probability of such an incident ; and to deter his successors from similar enterprises, had studiously degraded by an insult which, in every age, must be insufferable, and, in that, could only be expiated in the blood of the offenders. After his execution, the president of the council of ten appeared at a window of the ducal palace, holding a sword in one hand, and displaying the trunkless head of the old man in the other, and proclaimed to the assembled multitude that the traitor had but paid the penalty justly due to his crime. (A.D. 1355.)

Henceforward, the body of the nobles acted in strict unison, without perceiving that their power was gradually arrogated by a narrow oligarchy, which, with all possible diligence, proceeded at the same time to abridge the authority of the Doge, to hold him up to the people as a fit object of jealousy, and to make him responsible for every error of the government. Falier was held unworthy of that sepulture in the church of St. Mark with which his predecessors had always been honoured ; and the privilege itself was thenceforward abolished, to the prejudice of those who should succeed him. The law which forbade the Doges to take wives not natives of Venice was extended to their sons, who were also excluded from every place in the magistracy, and were requited for these incapacities by the empty title of *Cavalieri del*

* The bull which we have here abbreviated is quoted by many historians ; and is to be found in the original, in the Collection of Papal Bulls,—Vol. iii. page 118-120. Rome, 1741.

† Foscarini, *Litteratura Venegiani*, lib. iii.

Doge. So long as he lived, the family arms were displayed upon the ducal palace, but might not be affixed, like those of other patricians, upon the family mansion. A fine was imposed upon any who should address him, by writing or orally, in any other style than that of *Messer Doge*. Every one employed about his person, of whatever rank he might be, was excluded even from the lowest office connected directly or indirectly with the government. (A.D. 1400.)

These restraints, however severe they may appear, were still not strict enough in the eyes of the aristocracy. Whilst the naval and military force of the Republic was no longer placed at the disposition of the Doge, every war in which she engaged was ascribed to him as its author. By this subtle policy, the popular indignation was drawn down upon him by a doubtful or unsuccessful issue. Nor can it be inferred from this description, that this miserable throne was only filled by vain-glorious aspirants, since no one, when elected, could refuse to accept the office, nor, having accepted, could resign it. Another change went hand in hand with the degradation of the ducal authority; for the people were deprived, even in appearance, of that power of confirming the appointment of the Doge, of which they had been despoiled in substance at the election of Pietro Gradenigo, about a century before this period. On that occasion the nobility ventured, for the first time, to announce to the people, without waiting for the appropriate reply,—‘The Doge is elected — if you approve him.’ But, during the period to which we have just adverted, the nomination of Francisco Foscari was proclaimed to the people in this more concise and less respectful formula, — ‘The Doge is elected.’ (A.D. 1423.)

Nor did the encroachments of the oligarchy stop here. The despotism of the last-named Doge sufficiently evinces that it afterwards assumed the power of making, as well as of unmaking, the head of the state: though it so shrouded its usurpations under cover of the State Inquisition, which was established on this very occasion, that Venice, to appearance, remained under the government of a large and liberal aristocracy.

We have now arrived at the end of the ten first centuries of the Venetian history, and at the commencement of that constitution which, owing to the impenetrable secrecy wherewith it veiled its conduct, was preserved from any violent shock during nearly four centuries more, and only ended with the destruction of the state itself.

To examine and illustrate this intricate and interesting subject would lead us beyond the limits which are assigned to writers in periodical works. Probably, in a future article, we shall exhibit somewhat at large the structure and policy of the oligarchical State Inquisition, — a body which, though it checked or stifled the internal prosperity of the Republic, yet saved her from the causes of dissolution wherewith she was beset externally; skilfully concealed the progress of her decay, and covered her intrinsic weakness, down to the hour of her agony, with a specious and imposing appearance of strength and dignity.*

* It is stated in the life of the late *Ugo Foscolo*, published in the *Annual Obituary*, that he was the writer of this Essay. An article on the History of the Subversion of Venice, from another pen, appeared in an early number of the *Edin. Review*.—See Vol. xii. page 379.

ON THE CHARACTER AND EXECUTION OF CHARLES THE FIRST, AND ON THE MEASURES OF THE LONG PARLIAMENT.*

THE early measures of the Long Parliament, Mr. Hallam in general approves ; but he considers the proceedings which took place after the recess in the summer of 1641 as mischievous and violent. He thinks, that from that time the demands of the Houses were not warranted by any imminent danger to the Constitution ; and that in the war which ensued they were clearly the aggressors. As this is one of the most interesting questions in our history, we will venture to state, at some length, the reasons which have led us to form an opinion on it contrary to that of a writer whose judgment we so highly respect.

We will premise, that we think worse of King Charles the First than even Mr. Hallam appears to do. The fixed hatred of liberty, which was the principle of all his public conduct ; the unscrupulousness with which he adopted any means which might enable him to attain his ends ; the readiness with which he gave promises ; the impudence with which he broke them ; the cruel indifference with which he threw away his useless or damaged tools, rendered him — at least till his character was fully exposed, and his power shaken to its foundations — a more dangerous enemy to the constitution than a man of far greater talents and resolution might have been. Such princes may still be seen — the scandals of the southern thrones of Europe — princes false alike to the accomplices who have served them, and to the opponents who have spared them — princes who, in the hour of danger, concede every thing, swear every thing — hold out their cheeks to every smiter — give up to punishment every minister of their tyranny, and await with meek and smiling implacability the blessed day of perjury and proscription.

We will pass by the instances of oppression and falsehood which disgraced the early years of the reign of Charles. We will leave out of the question the whole history of his third Parliament — the price which he exacted for assenting to the petition of right — the perfidy with which he violated his engagements — the death of Eliot — the barbarous punishments inflicted by the Star-Chamber — the ship-money, and all the measures, now universally condemned, which disgraced his administration from 1630 to 1640. We will admit, that it might be the duty of the Parliament, after punishing the most guilty of his creatures — after abolishing the inquisitorial tribunals, which had been the instruments of his tyranny — after reversing the unjust sentences of his victims, to pause in its course. The concessions which had been made were great — the evils of civil war obvious — the advantages even of victory doubtful. The former errors of the king might be imputed to youth — to the pressure of circumstances — to the influence of evil counsel — to the undefined state of the law. We firmly believe, that if, even at this eleventh hour, Charles had acted fairly towards his people, if he had even acted fairly towards

* Hallam's Constitutional History of England.—Vol. xlviii. page 120. September, 1828.

his own partisans, the House of Commons would have given him a fair chance of retrieving the public confidence. Such was the opinion of Clarendon. He distinctly states, that the fury of opposition had abated — that a re-action had begun to take place — that the majority of those who had taken part against the king were desirous of an honourable and complete reconciliation; and that the more violent, or, as it soon appeared, the more judicious members of the party were fast declining in credit. The remonstrance had been carried with great difficulty. The uncompromising antagonists of the court, such as Cromwell, had begun to talk of selling their estates and leaving England. The event soon showed, that they were the only men who really understood how much inhumanity and fraud lay hid under the constitutional language and gracious demeanour of the King.

The attempt to seize the five members was undoubtedly the real cause of the war. From that moment, the loyal confidence with which most of the popular party were beginning to regard the King, was turned into hatred and incurable suspicion. From that moment, the Parliament was compelled to surround itself with defensive arms — from that moment the city assumed the appearance of a garrison — from that moment it was, that, in the phrase of Clarendon, the carriage of Hampden became fiercer — that he drew the sword, and threw away the scabbard. For, from that moment, it must have been evident to every impartial observer, that in the midst of professions, oaths, and smiles, the tyrant was constantly looking forward to an absolute sway and to a bloody revenge.

The advocates of Charles have very dexterously contrived to conceal from their readers the real nature of this transaction. By making concessions apparently candid and ample, they elude the great accusation. They allow that the measure was weak, and even frantic — an absurd caprice of Lord Digby, absurdly adopted by the King. And thus they save their client from the full penalty of his transgression, by entering a plea of guilty to the minor offence. To us his conduct appears at this day, as at the time it appeared to the Parliament and the city. We think it by no means so foolish as it pleases his friends to represent it, and far more wicked.

In the first place, the transaction was illegal from beginning to end. The impeachment was illegal. The process was illegal. The service was illegal. If Charles wished to prosecute the five members for treason, a bill against them should have been sent to a grand jury. That a commoner cannot be tried for high treason by the Lords at the suit of the Crown is part of the very alphabet of our law. That no man can be arrested by a message or a verbal summons of the King, with or without a warrant from a responsible magistrate, is equally clear. This was an established maxim of our jurisprudence in the time of Edward the Fourth. ‘A subject,’ said Chief Justice Markham to that prince, ‘may arrest for treason: the king cannot; for if the arrest be illegal, the party has no remedy against the king.’

The time at which Charles took this step also deserves consideration. We have already said, that the ardour which the Parliament had displayed at the time of its first meeting had considerably abated; that the leading opponents of the court were desponding, and that their followers were in general inclined to milder and more temperate measures than those which had hitherto been pursued. In every country, and in none more than in England, there is a disposition to take the

part of those who are unmercifully run down, and who seem destitute of all means of defence. Every man who has observed the ebb and flow of public feeling in our own time, will easily recall examples to illustrate this remark. An English statesman ought to pay assiduous worship to Nemesis — to be most apprehensive of ruin when he is at the height of power and popularity, and to dread his enemy most, when most completely prostrated. The fate of the Coalition Ministry in 1784 is perhaps the strongest instance in our history of the operation of this principle. A few weeks turned the ablest and most extended ministry that ever existed into a feeble opposition, and raised a king, who was talking of retiring to Hanover, to a height of power which none of his predecessors had enjoyed since the Revolution. A crisis of this description was evidently approaching in 1642. At such a crisis, a prince of a really honest and generous nature, who had erred, who had seen his error, who had regretted the lost affections of his people, who rejoiced in the dawning hope of regaining them, would be peculiarly careful to take no step which could give occasion of offence, even to the unreasonable. On the other hand, a tyrant, whose whole life was a lie, who hated the constitution the more because he had been compelled to feign respect for it, to whom his honour and the love of his people were as nothing, would select such a crisis for some appalling violation of law, for some stroke which might remove the chiefs of an opposition, and intimidate the herd. This, Charles attempted. He missed his blow: — but so narrowly, that it would have been mere madness in those at whom it was aimed to trust him again.

It deserves to be remarked, that the King had, a short time before, promised the most respectable Royalists in the House of Commons, Falkland, Colepepper, and Hyde, that he would take no measure in which that House was concerned, without consulting them. On this occasion he did not consult them. His conduct astonished them more than any other members of the Assembly. Clarendon says that they were deeply hurt by this want of confidence, and the more hurt, because, if they had been consulted, they would have done their utmost to dissuade Charles from so improper a proceeding. Did it never occur to Clarendon — will it not at least occur to men less partial — that there was good reason for this? When the danger to the throne seemed imminent, the King was ready to put himself for a time into the hands of those who, though they had disapproved of his past conduct, thought that the remedies had now become worse than the distempers. But we believe, that in heart he regarded both the parties in the Parliament with feelings of aversion, which differed only in the degree of their intensity; and that the awful warning which he proposed to give by immolating the principal supporters of the remonstrance, was partly intended for the instruction of those who had concurred in censuring the ship-money, and in abolishing the Star-Chamber.

The Commons informed the King that their members should be forthcoming to answer any charge legally brought against them. The Lords refused to assume the unconstitutional offices with which he attempted to invest them. And what then was his conduct? He went, attended by hundreds of armed men, to seize the objects of his hatred in the house itself! The party opposed to him more than insinuated that his purpose was of the most atrocious kind. We will not condemn him merely on their suspicions; — we will not hold him answerable for

the sanguinary expressions of the loose brawlers who composed his train. We will judge of his conduct by itself alone. And we say, without hesitation, that it is impossible to acquit him of having meditated violence, and violence which might probably end in blood. He knew that the legality of his proceedings was denied; he must have known that some of the accused members were not men likely to submit peaceably to an illegal arrest. There was every reason to expect that he would find them in their places, that they would refuse to obey his summons, and that the House would support them in their refusal. What course would then have been left to him? Unless we suppose that he went on this expedition for the sole purpose of making himself ridiculous, we must believe that he would have had recourse to force. There would have been a scuffle; and it might not, under such circumstances, have been in his power, even if it were in his inclination, to prevent a scuffle from ending in a massacre. Fortunately for his fame, unfortunately perhaps for what he prized far more, the interests of his hatred and his ambition, the affair ended differently. The birds, as he said, were flown, and his plan was disconcerted. Posterity is not extreme to mark abortive crimes; and thus his advocates have found it easy to represent a step which, but for a trivial accident, might have filled England with mourning and dismay, as a mere error of judgment, wild and foolish, but perfectly innocent. Such was not, however, at the time, the opinion of any party. The most zealous Royalists were so much disgusted and ashamed, that they suspended their opposition to the popular party, and, silently at least, concurred in measures of precaution so strong, as almost to amount to resistance.

From that day, whatever of confidence and loyal attachment had survived the misrule of seventeen years was, in the great body of the people, extinguished, and extinguished for ever. As soon as the outrage had failed, the hypocrisy recommenced. Down to the very eve of his flagitious attempt, Charles had been talking of his respect for the privileges of Parliament, and the liberties of his people. He began again in the same style on the morrow; but it was too late. To trust him now would have been, not moderation, but insanity. What common security would suffice against a prince who was evidently watching his season with that cold and patient hatred which, in the long run, tires out every other passion?

It is certainly from no admiration of Charles, that Mr. Hallam disapproves of the conduct of the House in resorting to arms. But he thinks, that any attempt on the part of that Prince to establish a despotism would have been as strongly opposed by his adherents as by his enemies; that the constitution might be considered as out of danger, or, at least, that it had more to apprehend from war than from the King. On this subject Mr. Hallam dilates at length, and with conspicuous ability. We will offer a few considerations, which lead us to incline to a different opinion.

The constitution of England was only one of a large family. In all the monarchies of Western Europe, during the middle ages, there existed restraints on the royal authority, fundamental laws, and representative assemblies. In the fifteenth century, the Government of Castile seems to have been as free as that of our own country. That of Arragon was beyond all question far more so. In France, the sovereign was more absolute. Yet, even in France, the States-General alone could constitutionally impose taxes; and at the very time when the

authority of those assemblies was beginning to languish, the Parliament of Paris received such an accession of strength, as enabled it, in some measure, to perform the functions of a legislative assembly. Sweden and Denmark had constitutions of a similar description.

Let us overleap two or three hundred years, and contemplate Europe at the commencement of the eighteenth century. Every free constitution, save one, had gone down. That of England had weathered the danger, and was riding in full security. In Denmark and Sweden, the kings had availed themselves of the disputes which raged between the nobles and the commons, to unite all the powers of government in their own hands. In France the institution of the states was only mentioned by lawyers as a part of the antient theory of their government. It slept a deep sleep — destined to be broken by a tremendous waking. No person remembered the sittings of the three orders, or expected ever to see them renewed. Louis the Fourteenth had imposed on his parliament a patient silence of sixty years. His grandson, after the war of the Spanish succession, assimilated the constitution of Arragon to that of Castile, and extinguished the last feeble remains of liberty in the Peninsula. In England, on the other hand, the parliament was infinitely more powerful than it had ever been. Not only was its legislative authority fully established, but its right to interfere, by advice almost equivalent to command, in every department of the executive government, was recognized. The appointment of ministers, the relations with foreign powers, the conduct of a war or a negotiation, depended less on the pleasure of the Prince than on that of the two Houses.

What then made us to differ? Why was it that, in that epidemic malady of constitutions, ours escaped the destroying influence; or rather that, at the very crisis of the disease, a favourable turn took place in England, and in England alone? It was not surely without a cause, that so many kindred systems of government, having flourished together so long, languished and expired at almost the same time.

It is the fashion to say, that the progress of civilization is favourable to liberty. The maxim, though on the whole true, must be limited by many qualifications and exceptions. Wherever a poor and rude nation, in which the form of government is a limited monarchy, receives a great accession of wealth and knowledge, it is in imminent danger of falling under arbitrary power.

In such a state of society as that which existed all over Europe during the middle ages, it was not from the king, but from the nobles, that there was danger. Very slight checks sufficed to keep the sovereign in order. His means of corruption and intimidation were very scanty. He had little money, little patronage, — no military establishment. His armies resembled juries. They were drafted out of the mass of the people; they soon returned to it again; and the character which was habitual prevailed over that which was occasional. A campaign of forty days was too short, the discipline of a national militia too lax, to efface from their minds the feelings of civil life. As they carried to the camp the sentiments and interests of the farm and the shop, so they carried back to the farm and the shop the military accomplishments which they had acquired in the camp. At home they learned how to value their rights, — abroad how to defend them.

Such a military force as this was a far stronger restraint on the regal power than the legislative assemblies. Resistance to an established

government, in modern times so difficult and perilous an enterprise, was, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the simplest and easiest matter in the world. Indeed, it was far too simple and easy. An insurrection was got up then almost as easily as a petition is got up now. In a popular cause, or even in an unpopular cause favoured by a few great nobles, an army was raised in a week. If the king were, like our Edward the Second and Richard the Second, generally odious, he could not procure a single bow or halbert. He fell at once, and without an effort. In such times a sovereign like Louis the Fifteenth, or the Emperor Paul, would have been pulled down before his misgovernment had lasted for a month. We find that all the fame and influence of our Edward the Third could not save *his* Madame de Pompadour from the effects of the public hatred.

Hume, and many other writers, have hastily concluded, that in the fifteenth century the English Parliament was altogether servile, because it recognised, without opposition, every successful usurper. That it was not servile, its conduct on many occasions of inferior importance is sufficient to prove. But surely it was not strange, that the majority of the nobles, and of the deputies chosen by the commons, should approve of revolutions which the nobles and commons had effected. The Parliament did not blindly follow the event of war; but participated in those changes of public sentiment, on which the event of war depended. The legal check was secondary and auxiliary to that which the nation held in its own hands. There have always been monarchies in Asia, in which the royal authority has been tempered by fundamental laws, though no legislative body exists to watch over them. The guarantee is the opinion of a community, of which every individual is a soldier. Thus the king of Caubul, as Mr. Elphinstone informs us, cannot augment the land revenue, or interfere with the jurisdiction of the ordinary tribunals.

In the European kingdoms of this description, there were representative assemblies. But it was not necessary that those assemblies should meet very frequently, that they should interfere with all the operations of the executive government, that they should watch with jealousy, and resent with prompt indignation, every violation of the laws which the sovereign might commit. They were so strong, that they might safely be careless. He was so feeble, that he might safely be suffered to encroach. If he ventured too far, chastisement and ruin were at hand. In fact, the people suffered more from his weakness than from his authority. The tyranny of wealthy and powerful subjects was the characteristic evil of the times. The royal prerogatives were not even sufficient for the defence of property and the maintenance of police.

The progress of civilization introduced a great change. War became a science; and, as a necessary consequence, a separate trade. The great body of the people grew every day more reluctant to undergo the inconveniences of military service, and better able to pay others for undergoing them. A new class of men, therefore, dependent on the crown alone, — natural enemies of those popular rights, which are to them as the dew to the fleece of Gideon, — slaves among freemen, — freemen among slaves, — grew into importance. That physical force, which in the dark ages had belonged to the nobles and the commons, and had, far more than any charter or any assembly, been the safeguard of their privileges, was transferred entire to the king. Monarchy gained in two ways. The sovereign was strengthened, the subjects weakened.

The great mass of the population, destitute of all military discipline and organization, ceased to exercise any influence by force on political transactions. There have, indeed, during the last hundred and fifty years, been many popular insurrections in Europe: but all have failed, — except those in which the regular army has been induced to join the disaffected.

Those legal checks, which had been adequate to the purpose for which they were designed, while the sovereign remained dependent on his subjects, were now found wanting. The dikes, which had been sufficient while the waters were low, were not high enough to keep out the spring-tide. The deluge passed over them; and, according to the exquisite illustration of Butler, the formal boundaries which had excluded it, now held it in. The old constitutions fared like the old shields and coats of mail. They were the defences of a rude age, and they did well enough against the weapons of a rude age. But new and more formidable means of destruction were invented. The antient panoply became useless; and it was thrown aside to rust in lumber-rooms, or exhibited only as part of an idle pageant.

Thus absolute monarchy was established on the Continent. England escaped; but she escaped very narrowly. Happily, our insular situation, and the pacific policy of James, rendered standing armies unnecessary here, till they had been for some time kept up in the neighbouring kingdoms. Our public men had therefore an opportunity of watching the effects produced by this momentous change, in forms of government which bore a close analogy to that established in England. Everywhere they saw the power of the monarch increasing, the resistance of assemblies, which were no longer supported by a national force, gradually becoming more and more feeble, and at length altogether ceasing. The friends and the enemies of liberty perceived with equal clearness the causes of this general decay. It is the favourite theme of Strafford. He advises the King to procure from the Judges a recognition of his right to raise an army at his pleasure. ‘This piece well fortified,’ says he, ‘for ever vindicates the monarchy at home from under the conditions and restraints of subjects.’ We firmly believe that he was in the right. Nay, we believe that, even if no deliberate scheme of arbitrary government had been formed by the sovereign and his ministers, there was great reason to apprehend a natural extinction of the constitution. If, for example, Charles had played the part of Gustavus Adolphus — if he had carried on a popular war for the defence of the Protestant cause in Germany — if he had gratified the national pride by a series of victories — if he had formed an army of forty or fifty thousand devoted soldiers, — we do not see what chance the nation would have had of escaping from despotism. The Judges would have given as strong a decision in favour of camp-money as they gave in favour of ship-money. If they had scrupled, it would have made little difference. An individual who resisted would have been treated as Charles treated Eliot, and as Strafford wished to treat Hampden. The Parliament might have been summoned once in twenty years, to congratulate a king on his accession, or to give solemnity to some great measure of state. Such had been the fate of legislative assemblies as powerful, as much respected, as high spirited, as the English Lords and Commons.

The two Houses, surrounded by the ruins of so many free constitutions, overthrown or sapped by the new military system, were required

to intrust the command of an army, and the conduct of the Irish war, to a King who had proposed to himself the destruction of liberty as the great end of his policy. We are decidedly of opinion that it would have been fatal to comply. Many of those who took the side of the King on this question, would have cursed their own loyalty if they had seen him return from war at the head of twenty thousand troops, accustomed to carnage and free quarters in Ireland.

We think with Mr. Hallam, that many of the royalist nobility and gentry were true friends to the constitution; and that, but for the solemn protestations by which the King bound himself to govern according to the law for the future, they never would have joined his standard. But surely they underrated the public danger. Falkland is commonly selected as the most respectable specimen of this class. He was indeed a man of great talents, and of great virtues; but, we apprehend, infinitely too fastidious for public life. He did not perceive that in such times as those on which his lot had fallen, the duty of a statesman is to choose the better cause, and to stand by it, in spite of those excesses by which every cause, however good in itself, will be disgraced. The present evil always seemed to him the worst. He was always going backward and forward; but it should be remembered to his honour, that it was always from the stronger to the weaker side that he deserted. While Charles was oppressing the people, Falkland was a resolute champion of liberty. He attacked Strafford. He even concurred in strong measures against Episcopacy. But the violence of his party annoyed him, and drove him to the other party, to be equally annoyed there. Dreading the success of the cause which he had espoused, sickened by the courtiers of Oxford, as he had been sickened by the patriots of Westminster, yet bound by honour not to abandon them, he pined away, neglected his person, went about moaning for peace, and at last rushed desperately on death as the best refuge in such miserable times. If he had lived through the scenes that followed, we have little doubt that he would have condemned himself to share the exile and beggary of the royal family; that he would then have returned to oppose all their measures; that he would have been sent to the Tower by the Commons as a disbeliever in the Popish Plot, and by the King as an accomplice in the Rye-House Plot; and that, if he had escaped being hanged, first by Scroggs, and then by Jefferies, he would, after manfully opposing James the Second through his whole reign, have been seized with a fit of compassion at the very moment of the Revolution, have voted for a regency, and died a non-juror.

We do not dispute that the royal party contained many excellent men and excellent citizens. But this we say, — that they did not discern those times. The peculiar glory of the Houses of Parliament is, that, in the great plague and mortality of constitutions, they took their stand between the living and the dead. At the very crisis of our destiny, at the very moment when the fate which had passed on every other nation was about to pass on England, they arrested the danger.

Those who conceive that the parliamentary leaders were desirous merely to maintain the old constitution, and those who represent them as conspiring to subvert it, are equally in error. The old constitution, as we have attempted to show, could not be maintained. The progress of time, the increase of wealth, the diffusion of knowledge, the great change in the European system of war, rendered it impossible that any of the monarchies of the middle ages should continue to exist on the

old footing. The prerogative of the crown was constantly advancing. If the privileges of the people were to remain absolutely stationary, they would relatively retrograde. The monarchical and democratical parts of the government were placed in a situation not unlike that of the two brothers in the Fairy Queen, one of whom saw the soil of his inheritance daily washed away by the tide, and joined to that of his rival. The portions had at first been fairly meted out; by a natural and constant transfer, the one had been extended, the other had dwindled to nothing. A new partition, or a compensation, was necessary to restore the original equality.

It was now absolutely necessary to violate the formal part of the constitution, in order to preserve its spirit. This might have been done, as it was done at the Revolution, by expelling the reigning family, and calling to the throne princes, who, relying solely on an elective title, would find it necessary to respect the privileges and follow the advice of the assemblies to which they owed every thing, to pass every bill which the legislature strongly pressed upon them, and to fill the offices of state with men in whom it confided. But as the two Houses did not choose to change the dynasty, it was necessary that they should do directly what at the Revolution was done indirectly. Nothing is more usual than to hear it said, that if the Long Parliament had contented itself with making such a reform in the government under Charles as was afterwards made under William, it would have had the highest claim to national gratitude; and that in its violence it overshot the mark. But how was it possible to make such a settlement under Charles? Charles was not, like William and the princes of the Hanoverian line, bound by community of interests and dangers to the two Houses. It was therefore necessary that they should bind him by treaty and statute.

Mr. Hallam reprobates, in language which has a little surprised us, the nineteen propositions, into which the Parliament digested its scheme. We will ask him whether he does not think that, if James the Second had remained in the island, and had been suffered — as he probably would in that case have been suffered — to keep his crown, conditions to the full as hard would have been imposed on him? On the other hand, if the Long Parliament had pronounced the departure of Charles from London an abdication, and had called Essex or Northumberland to the throne, the new prince might have safely been suffered to reign without such restrictions; — his situation would have been a sufficient guarantee. In the nineteen propositions, we see very little to blame except the articles against the Catholics. These, however, were in the spirit of that age; and to some sturdy churchmen in our own, they may seem to palliate even the good which the Long Parliament effected. The regulation with respect to new creations of Peers is the only other article about which we entertain any doubt.

One of the propositions is, that the Judges shall hold their offices during good behaviour. To this surely no exception will be taken. The right of directing the education and marriage of the Princes was most properly claimed by the Parliament, on the same ground on which, after the Revolution, it was enacted, that no King, on pain of forfeiting his throne, should espouse a Papist. Unless we condemn the statesmen of the Revolution, who conceived that England could not safely be governed by a Sovereign married to a Catholic Queen, we can scarcely condemn the Long Parliament, because, having a Sovereign so situated,

they thought it necessary to place him under strict restraints. The influence of Henrietta Maria had already been deeply felt in political affairs. In the regulation of her family, in the education and marriage of her children, it was still more likely to be felt. There might be another Catholic Queen; possibly, a Catholic King. Little as we are disposed to join in the vulgar clamour on this subject, we think that such an event ought to be, if possible, averted; and this could only be done, if Charles was to be left on the throne, by placing his domestic arrangements under the control of Parliament.

A veto on the appointment of ministers was demanded. But this veto Parliament has virtually possessed ever since the Revolution. It is, no doubt, very far better that this power of the legislature should be exercised as it is now exercised, when any great occasion calls for interference, than that at every change it should have to signify its approbation or disapprobation in form. But, unless a new family had been placed on the throne, we do not see how this power could have been exercised as it is now exercised. We again repeat, that no restraints which could be imposed on the princes who reigned after the Revolution could have added to the security which their title afforded. They were compelled to court their Parliaments. But from Charles nothing was to be expected which was not set down in the bond.

It was not stipulated that the King should give up his negative on acts of Parliament. But the Commons had certainly shown a strong disposition to exact this security also. ‘Such a doctrine,’ says Mr. Hallam, ‘was in this country as repugnant to the whole history of our laws, as it was incompatible with the subsistence of the monarchy in any thing more than a nominal pre-eminence.’ Now this article has been as completely carried into effect by the Revolution as if it had been formally inserted in the Bill of Rights and the Act of Settlement. We are surprised, we confess, that Mr. Hallam should attach so much importance to a prerogative which has not been exercised for a hundred and thirty years, which probably will never be exercised again, and which can scarcely in any conceivable case be exercised for a salutary purpose.

But the great security, that without which every other would have been insufficient, was the power of the sword. This both parties thoroughly understood. The Parliament insisted on having the command of the militia, and the direction of the Irish war. ‘By God, not for an hour!’ exclaimed the King. ‘Keep the militia,’ said the Queen, after the defeat of the royal party; ‘keep the militia; that will bring back every thing.’ That, by the old constitution, no military authority was lodged in the Parliament, Mr. Hallam has clearly shown. That it is a species of power which ought not to be permanently lodged in large and divided assemblies must, we think, in fairness be conceded. Opposition, publicity, long discussion, frequent compromise, these are the characteristics of the proceedings in such bodies. Unity, secrecy, decision, are the qualities which military arrangements require. This undoubtedly was an evil. But, on the other hand, at such a crisis to trust such a King with the very weapon which, in hands less dangerous, had destroyed so many free constitutions, would have been the extreme of rashness. The jealousy with which the oligarchy of Venice and the States of Holland regarded their generals and armies, induced them perpetually to interfere in matters of which they were incompetent to judge. This policy secured them against military usurpation, but

placed them under great disadvantages in war. The uncontrolled power which the King of France exercised over his troops enabled him to conquer his enemies, but enabled him also to oppress his people. Was there any intermediate course? None, we confess, altogether free from objection. But, on the whole, we conceive that the best measure would have been that which the Parliament over and over proposed,—that for a limited time the power of the sword should be left to the two Houses, and that it should revert to the Crown when the constitution should be firmly established; when the new securities of freedom should be so far strengthened by prescription, that it would be difficult to employ even a standing army for the purpose of subverting them.

Mr. Hallam thinks that the dispute might easily have been compromised, by enacting that the King should have no power to keep a standing army on foot without the consent of Parliament. He reasons as if the question had been merely theoretical — as if, at that time, no army had been wanted. ‘The kingdom,’ he says, ‘might have well ‘dispensed, in that age, with any military organization.’ Now, we think that Mr. Hallam overlooks the most important circumstance in the whole case. Ireland was at that moment in rebellion; and a great expedition would obviously be necessary to reduce that kingdom to obedience. The Houses had therefore to consider, not an abstract question of law, but an urgent practical question, directly involving the safety of the state. They had to consider the expediency of immediately giving a great army to a King who was at least as desirous to put down the Parliament of England as to conquer the insurgents of Ireland.

Of course, we do not mean to defend all their measures. Far from it. There never was a perfect man: it would, therefore, be the height of absurdity to expect a perfect party or a perfect assembly. For large bodies are far more likely to err than individuals. The passions are inflamed by sympathy; the fear of punishment and the sense of shame are diminished by partition. Every day we see men do for their faction what they would die rather than do for themselves.

No private quarrel ever happens, in which the right and wrong are so exquisitely divided that all the right lies on one side and all the wrong on the other. But here was a schism which separated a great nation into two parties. Of these parties, each was composed of many smaller parties. Each contained many members, who differed far less from their moderate opponents than from their violent allies. Each reckoned among its supporters many who were determined in their choice by some accident of birth, of connexion, or of local situation. Each of them attracted to itself in multitudes those fierce and turbid spirits, to whom the clouds and whirlwinds of the political hurricane are the atmosphere of life. A party, like a camp, has its sutlers and camp-followers, as well as its soldiers. In its progress it collects round it a vast retinue, composed of people who thrive by its custom, or are amused by its display; who may be sometimes reckoned, in an ostentatious enumeration, as forming a part of it, but who give no aid to its operations, and take but a languid interest in its success; who relax its discipline and dishonour its flag by their irregularities; and who, after a disaster, are perfectly ready to cut the throats and rifle the baggage of their companions.

Thus it is in every great division; and thus it was in our civil war. On both sides there was, undoubtedly, enough of crime and enough of

error to disgust any man who did not reflect that the whole history of the species is nothing but a comparison of crimes and errors. Misanthropy is not the temper which qualifies a man to act in great affairs, or to judge of them.

‘Of the Parliament,’ says Mr. Hallam, ‘it may be said, I think, with not greater severity than truth, that scarce two or three public acts of justice, humanity, or generosity, and very few of political wisdom or courage, are recorded of them, from their quarrel with the King to their expulsion by Cromwell.’ Those who may agree with us in the opinion which we have expressed as to the original demands of the Parliament, will scarcely concur in this strong censure. The propositions which the Houses made at Oxford, at Uxbridge, and at Newcastle, were in strict accordance with these demands. In the darkest period of the war, they showed no disposition to concede any vital principle: in the fulness of their success, they showed no disposition to encroach beyond these limits. In this respect we cannot but think that they showed justice and generosity, as well as political wisdom and courage.

The Parliament was certainly far from faultless. We fully agree with Mr. Hallam in reprobating their treatment of Laud. For the individual, indeed, we entertain a more unmitigated contempt than for any other character in our history. The fondness with which a portion of the church regards his memory can be compared only to that perversity of affection which sometimes leads a mother to select the monster or the idiot of the family as the object of her especial favour. Mr. Hallam has incidentally observed, that, in the correspondence of Laud with Strafford, there are no indications of a sense of duty towards God or man. The admirers of the Archbishop have, in consequence, inflicted upon the public a crowd of extracts, designed to prove the contrary. Now, in all those passages, we see nothing which a prelate as wicked as Pope Alexander or Cardinal Dubois might not have written. They indicate no sense of duty to God or man; but simply a strong interest in the prosperity and dignity of the order to which the writer belonged; an interest which, when kept within certain limits, does not deserve censure, but which can never be considered as a virtue. Laud is anxious to accommodate satisfactorily the disputes in the University of Dublin. He regrets to hear that a church is used as a stable, and that the benefices of Ireland are very poor. He is desirous that, however small a congregation may be, service should be regularly performed. He expresses a wish that the judges of the court before which questions of tithe are generally brought, should be selected with a view to the interest of the clergy. All this may be very proper; and it may be very proper that an alderman should stand up for the tolls of his borough, and an East Indian director for the charter of his company. But it is ridiculous to say that these things indicate piety and benevolence. No primate, though he were the most abandoned of mankind, would wish to see the body, with the consequence of which his own consequence was identical, degraded in the public estimation by internal dissensions, by the ruinous state of its edifices, and the slovenly performance of its rites. We willingly acknowledge that the particular letters in question have very little harm in them;—a compliment which cannot often be paid either to the writings or to the actions of Laud.

Bad as the Archbishop was, however, he was not a traitor within the statute. Nor was he by any means so formidable as to be a proper

subject for a retrospective ordinance of the legislature. His mind had not expansion enough to comprehend a great scheme, good or bad. His oppressive acts were not, like those of the Earl of Strafford, parts of an extensive system. They were the luxuries in which a mean and irritable disposition indulges itself from day to day,—the excesses natural to a little mind in a great place. The severest punishment which the two Houses could have inflicted on him would have been to set him at liberty, and send him to Oxford. There he might have staid, tortured by his own diabolical temper, hungering for Puritans to pillory and mangle, plaguing the cavaliers, for want of somebody else to plague, with his peevishness and absurdity, performing grimaces and antics in the cathedral, continuing that incomparable diary which we never see without forgetting the vices of his heart in the abject imbecility of his intellect, minuting down his dreams, counting the drops of blood which fell from his nose, watching the direction of the salt, and listening for the note of the screech-owl! Contemptuous mercy was the only vengeance which it became the Parliament to take on such a ridiculous old bigot.

The Houses, it must be acknowledged, committed great errors in the conduct of the war; or rather one great error, which brought their affairs into a condition requiring the most perilous expedients. The parliamentary leaders of what may be called the first generation, Essex, Manchester, Northumberland, Hollis, even Pym,—all the most eminent men, in short, Hampden excepted, were inclined to half measures. They dreaded a decisive victory almost as much as a decisive overthrow. They wished to bring the King into a situation which might render it necessary for him to grant their just and wise demands, but not to subvert the constitution or to change the dynasty. They were afraid of serving the purposes of those fiercer and more determined enemies of monarchy who now began to show themselves in the lower ranks of the party. The war was, therefore, conducted in a languid and inefficient manner. A resolute leader might have brought it to a close in a month. At the end of three campaigns, however, the event was still dubious; and that it had not been decidedly unfavourable to the cause of liberty was principally owing to the skill and energy which the more violent Roundheads had displayed in subordinate situations. The conduct of Fairfax and Cromwell at Marston had exhibited a remarkable contrast to that of Essex at Edgehill, and Waller at Lansdown.

If there be any truth established by the universal experience of nations, it is this,—that to carry the spirit of peace into war is a weak and cruel policy. The time of negotiation is the time for deliberation and delay. But when an extreme case calls for that remedy, which is in its own nature most violent, and which, in such cases, is a remedy only because it is violent, it is idle to think of mitigating and diluting. Languid war can do nothing which negotiation or submission will not do better; and to act on any other principle is not to save blood and money, but to squander them.

This the Parliamentary leaders found. The third year of hostilities was drawing to a close, and they had not conquered the King. They had not obtained even those advantages which they had expected, from a policy obviously erroneous in a military point of view. They had wished to husband their resources. They now found that, in enterprises like theirs, parsimony is the worst profusion. They had hoped

to effect a reconciliation. The event taught them that the best way to conciliate is to bring the work of destruction to a speedy termination. By their moderation, many lives and much property had been wasted. The angry passions which, if the contest had been short, would have died away almost as soon as they appeared, had fixed themselves in the form of deep and lasting hatred. A military caste had grown up. Those who had been induced to take up arms by the patriotic feelings of citizens, had begun to entertain the professional feelings of soldiers. Above all, the leaders of the party had forfeited its confidence. If they had, by their valour and abilities, gained a complete victory, their influence might have been sufficient to prevent their associates from abusing it. It was now necessary to choose more resolute and uncompromising commanders. Unhappily, the illustrious man who alone united in himself all the talents and virtues which the crisis required, who alone could have saved his country from the present dangers, without plunging her into others, who alone could have united all the friends of liberty in obedience to his commanding genius and his venerable name, was no more. Something might still be done. The Houses might still avert that worst of all evils, the triumphant return of an imperious and unprincipled master. They might still preserve London from all the horrors of a rapine, massacre, and lust. But their hopes of a victory spotless as their cause — of a reconciliation which might knit together the hearts of all honest Englishmen for the defence of the public good, — of durable tranquillity, — of temperate freedom, were buried in the grave of Hampden.

The self-denying ordinance was passed, and the army was remodelled. These measures were, undoubtedly, full of danger. But all that was left to the Parliament was to take the less of two dangers. And we think that, even if they could have accurately foreseen all that followed, their decision ought to have been the same. Under any circumstances, we should have preferred Cromwell to Charles. But there could be no comparison between Cromwell, and Charles victorious, — Charles restored, — Charles enabled to feed fat all the hungry judges of his smiling rancour and his cringing pride. The next visit of his Majesty to his faithful Commons would have been more serious than that with which he last honoured them, — more serious than that which their own general paid them some years after. The King would scarce have been content with collaring Marten, and praying that the Lord would deliver him from Vane. If, by fatal mismanagement, nothing was left to England but a choice of tyrants, the last tyrant whom she should have chosen was Charles.

From the apprehension of this worst evil the Houses were soon delivered by their new leader. The armies of Charles were everywhere routed; his fortresses stormed; his party humbled and subjugated. The King himself fell into the hands of the Parliament; and both the King and the Parliament soon fell into the hands of the army. The fate of both the captives was the same: both were treated alternately with respect and with insult. At length the natural life of the one, and the political life of the other, were terminated by violence; and the power for which both had struggled was united in a single hand. Men naturally sympathise with the calamities of individuals; but they are inclined to look on a fallen party with contempt rather than with pity. Thus misfortune turned the greatest of Parliaments into the despised Rump, and the worst of Kings into the Blessed Martyr.

Mr. Hallam decidedly condemns the execution of Charles ; and in all that he says on that subject we heartily agree. We fully concur with him in thinking that a great social schism, such as the civil war, is not to be confounded with an ordinary treason ; and that the vanquished ought to be treated according to the rules, not of municipal, but of international law. In this case the distinction is of the less importance, because both international and municipal law were in favour of Charles. He was a prisoner of war by the former, a king by the latter. By neither was he a traitor. If he had been successful, and had put his leading opponents to death, he would have deserved severe censure ; and this without reference to the justice or injustice of his cause. Yet the opponents of Charles, it must be admitted, were technically guilty of treason. He might have sent them to the scaffold without violating any established principle of jurisprudence. He would not have been compelled to overturn the whole constitution in order to reach them. Here his own case differed widely from theirs. Not only was his condemnation in itself a measure which only the strongest necessity could vindicate, but it could not be procured without taking several previous steps, every one of which would have required the strongest necessity to vindicate it. It could not be procured without dissolving the government by military force, without establishing precedents of the most dangerous description, without creating difficulties which the next ten years were spent in removing, without pulling down institutions which it soon became necessary to reconstruct, and setting up others which almost every man was soon impatient to destroy. It was necessary to strike the House of Lords out of the constitution, to exclude members of the House of Commons by force, to make a new crime, a new tribunal, a new mode of procedure. The whole legislative and judicial systems were trampled down for the purpose of taking a single head. Not only those parts of the constitution which the republicans were desirous to destroy, but those which they wished to retain and exalt, were deeply injured by these transactions. High Courts of Justice began to usurp the functions of juries. The remaining delegates of the people were soon driven from their seats by the same military violence which had enabled them to exclude their colleagues.

If Charles had been the last of his line, there would have been an intelligible reason for putting him to death. But the blow which terminated his life, at once transferred the allegiance of every royalist to an heir, and an heir who was at liberty. To kill the individual was truly, under such circumstances, not to destroy, but to release the king.

We detest the character of Charles ; but a man ought not to be removed by a law *ex post facto*, even constitutionally procured, merely because he is detestable. He must also be very dangerous. We can scarcely conceive that any danger which a state can apprehend from any individual could justify the violent measures which were necessary to procure a sentence against Charles. But in fact the danger amounted to nothing. There was indeed danger from the attachment of a large party to his office ; but this danger his execution only increased. His personal influence was little indeed. He had lost the confidence of every party. Churchmen, Catholics, Presbyterians, Independents, his enemies, his friends, his tools, English, Scotch, Irish, all divisions and subdivisions of his people had been deceived by him. His most attached councillors turned away with shame and anguish from his false

and hollow policy; plot intertwined with plot, mine sprung beneath mine, agents disowned, promises evaded, one pledge given in private, another in public. — ‘Oh, Mr. Secretary,’ says Clarendon, in a letter to Nicholas, ‘those stratagemis have given me more sad hours than all the misfortunes in war which have befallen the King, and look like the effects of God’s anger towards us.’

The abilities of Charles were not formidable. His taste in the fine arts was indeed exquisite. He was as good a writer and speaker as any modern sovereign has been. But he was not fit for active life. In negotiation he was always trying to dupe others, and duping only himself. As a soldier, he was feeble, dilatory, and miserably wanting, not in personal courage, but in the presence of mind which his station required. His delay at Gloucester saved the parliamentary party from destruction. At Naseby, in the very crisis of his fortune, his want of self-possession spread a fatal panic through his army. The story which Clarendon tells of that affair reminds us of the excuses by which Bessus and Bobadil explain their cudgellings. A Scotch nobleman, it seems, begged the king not to run upon his death, took hold of his bridle, and turned his horse round. No man who had much value for his life would have tried to perform the same friendly office on that day for Oliver Cromwell.

One thing, and one alone, could make Charles dangerous — a violent death. His tyranny could not break the high spirit of the English people; his arms could not conquer, his arts could not deceive them; but his humiliation and his execution melted them into a generous compassion. Men who die on a scaffold for political offences almost always die well. The eyes of thousands are fixed upon them. Enemies and admirers are watching their demeanour. Every tone of voice, every change of colour, is to go down to posterity. Escape is impossible. Supplication is vain. In such a situation, pride and despair have often been known to nerve the weakest minds with fortitude adequate to the occasion. Charles died patiently and bravely; not more patiently or bravely, indeed, than many other victims of political rage; not more patiently or bravely than his own Judges, who were not only killed, but tortured; or than Vane, who had always been considered as a timid man. However, his conduct during his trial and at his execution made a prodigious impression. His subjects began to love his memory as heartily as they had hated his person; and posterity has estimated his character from his death rather than from his life.

To represent Charles as a martyr in the cause of Episcopacy is absurd. Those who put him to death cared as little for the Assembly of Divines as for the Convocation; and would, in all probability, only have hated him the more if he had agreed to set up the Presbyterian discipline: and, in spite of the opinion of Mr. Hallam, we are inclined to think that the attachment of Charles to the Church of England was altogether political. Human nature is indeed so capricious, that there may be a single sensitive point in a conscience which everywhere else is callous. A man without truth or humanity may have some strange scruples about a trifle. There was one devout warrior in the royal camp, whose piety bore a great resemblance to that which is ascribed to the king. We mean Colonel Turner. That gallant cavalier was hanged, after the Restoration, for a flagitious burglary. At the gallows, he told the crowd that his mind received great consolation from one

reflection — he had always taken off his hat when he went into a church! The character of Charles would scarcely rise in our estimation if we believed that he was pricked in conscience after the manner of this worthy loyalist, and that, while violating all the first rules of Christian morality, he was sincerely scrupulous about church-government. But we acquit him of such weakness. In 1641, he deliberately confirmed the Scotch declaration, which stated that the government of the church by archbishops and bishops was contrary to the word of God. In 1645, he appears to have offered to set up Popery in Ireland. That a king who had established the Presbyterian religion in one kingdom, and who was willing to establish the Catholic religion in another, should have insurmountable scruples about the ecclesiastical constitution of the third, is altogether incredible. He himself says in his letters, that he looks on Episcopacy as a stronger support of monarchical power than even the army. From causes which we have already considered, the Established Church had been, since the Reformation, the great bulwark of the prerogative. Charles wished, therefore, to preserve it. He thought himself necessary both to the Parliament and to the army. He did not foresee, till too late, that by paltering with the Presbyterians, he should put both them and himself into the power of a fiercer and more daring party. If he had foreseen it, we suspect that the royal blood, which still cries to Heaven every thirtieth of January for judgments, only to be averted by salt fish and egg-sauce, would never have been shed. One who had swallowed the Scotch Declaration would scarcely strain at the Covenant.

ON THE CHARACTER AND TIMES OF CHARLES THE SECOND.*

No part of our history, during the last three centuries, presents a spectacle of such general dreariness as during the times which followed the Restoration. The whole breed of our statesmen seems to have degenerated; and their moral and intellectual littleness strikes us with the more disgust, because we see it placed in immediate contrast with the high and majestic qualities of the race which they succeeded. In the great civil war, even the bad cause had been rendered respectable and amiable by the purity and elevation of mind which many of its friends displayed. Under Charles the Second, the best and noblest of ends was disgraced by means the most cruel and sordid. The rage of faction succeeded to the love of liberty. Loyalty died away into servility. We look in vain among the leading politicians of either side for steadiness of principle, or even for that vulgar fidelity to party which, in our time, it is esteemed infamous to violate. The inconsistency, perfidy, and baseness which the leaders constantly practised, which their followers defended, and which the great body of the people regarded, as it seems, with little disapprobation, appear in the present age almost incredible. In the age of Charles the First, they would, we believe, have excited as much astonishment.

* Hallam's Constitutional History of England.—Vol. xlviii. page 150. September, 1828.

Man, however, is always the same. And when so marked a difference appears between two generations, it is certain that the solution may be found in their respective circumstances. The principal statesmen of the reign of Charles the Second were trained during the civil war, and the revolutions which followed it. Such a period is eminently favourable to the growth of quick and active talents. It forms a class of men, shrewd, vigilant, inventive, — of men whose dexterity triumphs over the most perplexing combinations of circumstances, whose presaging instinct, no sign of the times, no incipient change of public feelings, can elude. But it is an unpropitious season for the firm and masculine virtues. The statesman who enters on his career at such a time can form no permanent connexions — can make no accurate observations on the higher parts of political science. Before he can attach himself to a party, it is scattered; before he can study the nature of a government, it is overturned. The oath of abjuration comes close on the oath of allegiance. The association which was subscribed yesterday is burned by the hangman to-day. In the midst of the constant eddy and change, self-preservation becomes the first object of the adventurer. It is a task too hard for the strongest head, to keep itself from becoming giddy in the eternal whirl. Public spirit is out of the question; a laxity of principle, without which no public man can be eminent, or even safe, becomes too common to be scandalous; and the whole nation looks coolly on instances of apostacy, which would startle the foulest turncoat of more settled times.

The history of France since the Revolution affords some striking illustrations of these remarks. The same man was minister of the Republic, of Bonaparte, of Lewis the Eighteenth, of Bonaparte again after his return from Elba, of Lewis again after his return from Ghent. Yet all these manifold treasons by no means seemed to destroy his influence, or even to fix any peculiar stain of infamy on his character. We, to be sure, did not know what to make of him; but his countrymen did not seem to be shocked — and in truth they had little right to be shocked; for there was scarcely one Frenchman, distinguished in the state or in the army, who had not, according to the best of his talents and opportunities, emulated the example. It was natural, too, that this should be the case. The rapidity and violence with which change followed change in the affairs of France, towards the close of the last century, had taken away the reproach of inconsistency, unfixed the principles of public men, and produced in many minds a general scepticism and indifference about principles of government.

No Englishman who has studied attentively the reign of Charles the Second will think himself entitled to indulge in any feelings of national superiority over the *Dictionnaire des Girouettes*. Shaftesbury was surely a far less respectable man than Talleyrand; and it would be injustice even to Fouché to compare him with Lauderdale. Nothing, indeed, can more clearly show how low the standard of political morality had fallen in this country than the fortunes of the men whom we have named. The government wanted a ruffian to carry on the most atrocious system of misgovernment with which any nation was ever cursed — to extirpate Presbyterianism by fire and sword, the drowning of women, and the frightful torture of the boot. And they found him among the chiefs of the rebellion, and the subscribers of the Covenant! The opposition looked for a chief to head them in the most desperate attacks ever made, under the forms of the constitution, on any English

administration; and they selected the minister who had the deepest share in the worst parts of that administration — the soul of the cabal — the counsellor who had shut up the Exchequer, and urged on the Dutch war. The whole political drama was of the same cast. No unity of plan, no decent propriety of character and costume, could be found in the wild and monstrous harlequinade. The whole was made up of extravagant transformations and burlesque contrasts; Atheists turned Puritans; Puritans turned Atheists; republicans defending the divine right of kings; prostitute courtiers clamouring for the liberties of the people; judges inflaming the rage of mobs; patriots pocketing bribes from foreign powers; a Popish prince torturing Presbyterians into Episcopacy in one part of the island; Presbyterians cutting off the heads of Popish noblemen and gentlemen in the other. Public opinion has its natural flux and reflux. After a violent burst, there is commonly a re-action. But vicissitudes so extraordinary as those which marked the reign of Charles the Second can only be explained by supposing an utter want of principle in the political world. On neither side was there fidelity enough to face a reverse. Those honourable retreats from power, which, in later days, parties have often made, with loss, but still in good order, in firm union, with unbroken spirit, and formidable means of annoyance, were utterly unknown. As soon as a check took place, a total rout followed — arms and colours were thrown away. The vanquished troops, like the Italian mercenaries of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, enlisted, on the very field of battle, in the service of the conquerors. In a nation proud of its sturdy justice and plain good sense, no party could be found to take a firm middle stand between the worst of oppositions and the worst of courts. When, on charges as wild as Mother Goose's tales, on the testimony of wretches who proclaimed themselves to be spies and traitors, and whom every body now believes to have been also liars and murderers, the offal of gaols and brothels, the leavings of the hangman's whip and shears, Catholics guilty of nothing but their religion were led like sheep to the Protestant shambles, where were the loyal Tory gentry, and the passively obedient clergy? And where, when the time of retribution came, when laws were strained and juries packed, to destroy the leaders of the Whigs, when charters were invaded, when Jefferies and Kirke were making Somersetshire what Lauderdale and Graham had made Scotland, where were the ten thousand brisk boys of Shaftesbury, the members of *ignoramus* juries, the wearers of the Polish medal? All powerful to destroy others, unable to save themselves, the members of the two parties oppressed and were oppressed, murdered and were murdered, in their turn. No lucid interval occurred between the frantic paroxysms of two contradictory illusions.

To the frequent changes of the government during the twenty years which had preceded the Revolution, this unsteadiness is in a great measure to be attributed. Other causes had also been at work. Even if the country had been governed by the house of Cromwell, or the remains of the Long Parliament, the extreme austerity of the Puritans would necessarily have produced a revulsion. Towards the close of the Protectorate, many signs indicated that a time of license was at hand. But the restoration of Charles the Second rendered the change wonderfully rapid and violent. Profligacy became a test of orthodoxy and loyalty, a qualification for rank and office. A deep and general

taint infected the morals of the most influential classes, and spread itself through every province of letters. Poetry inflamed the passions; philosophy undermined the principles; divinity itself, inculcating an abject reverence for the court, gave additional effect to its licentious example. We look in vain for those qualities which give a charm to the errors of high and ardent natures, for the generosity, the tenderness, the chivalrous delicacy, which ennoble appetites into passions, and impart to vice itself a portion of the majesty of virtue. The excesses of the age remind us of the humours of a gang of footpads, revelling with their favourite beauties at a flash-house. In the fashionable libertinism there is a hard, cold ferocity, an impudence, a lowness, a dirtiness, which can be paralleled only among the heroes and heroines of that filthy and heartless literature which encouraged it. One nobleman of great abilities wanders about as a Merry-Andrew. Another harangues the mob starknaked from a window. A third lays an ambush to cudgel a man who has offended him. A knot of gentlemen of high rank and influence combine to push their fortunes at court by circulating stories intended to ruin an innocent girl, stories which had no foundation, and which, if they had been true, would never have passed the lips of a man of honour.* A dead child is found in the palace, the offspring of some maid of honour by some courtier, or perhaps by Charles himself. The whole flight of pandars and buffoons pounce upon it, and carry it in triumph to the royal laboratory, where his Majesty, after a brutal jest, dissects it for the amusement of the assembly, and probably of its father among the rest! The favourite Duchess stamps about Whitehall, cursing and swearing. The ministers employ their time at the council-board in making mouths at each other, and taking off each others gestures for the amusement of the King. The Peers at a conference begin to pommel each other, and to tear collars and periwigs. A speaker in the House of Commons gives offence to the court. He is waylaid by a gang of bullies, and his nose is cut to the bone. This ignominious dissoluteness, or rather, if we may venture to designate it by the only proper word, blackguardism of feeling and manners, could not but spread from private to public life. The cynical sneers, the epicurean sophistry, which had driven honour and virtue from one part of the character, extended their influence over every other. The second generation of the statesmen of this reign were worthy pupils of the schools in which they had been trained, of the gaming-table of Grammont, and the tiring-room of Nell. In no other age could such a trifle as Buckingham have exercised any political influence. In no other age could the path to power and glory have been thrown open to the manifold infamies of Churchill.

The history of that celebrated man shows, more clearly perhaps than that of any other individual, the malignity and extent of the corruption which had eaten into the heart of the public morality. An English gentleman of family attaches himself to a Prince who has seduced his sister, and accepts rank and wealth as the price of her shame and his own. He then repays by ingratitude the benefits which he has purchased by ignominy, betrays his patron in a manner which the best cause cannot excuse, and commits an act, not only of private treachery,

* The manner in which Hamilton relates the circumstances of the atrocious plot against poor Anne Hyde, is, if possible, more disgraceful to the court, of which he may be considered as a specimen, than the plot itself.

but of distinct military desertion. To his conduct at the crisis of the fate of James, no service in modern times has, as far as we remember, furnished any parallel. The conduct of Ney, scandalous enough no doubt, is the very fastidiousness of honour in comparison of it. The perfidy of Arnold approaches it most nearly. In our age and country no talents, no services, no party attachments, could bear any man up under such mountains of infamy. Yet, even before Churchill had performed those great actions, which in some degree redeem his character with posterity, the load lay very lightly on him. He had others in abundance to keep him in countenance. Godolphin, Orford, Danby, the trimmer Halifax, the renegade Sunderland, were all men of the same class.

Where such was the political morality of the noble and the wealthy, it may easily be conceived that those professions which, even in the best times, are peculiarly liable to corruption, were in a frightful state. Such a bench and such a bar England has never seen. Jones, Scroggs, Jefferies, North, Wright, Sawyer, Williams, Shower, are to this day the spots and blemishes of our legal chronicles. Differing in constitution and in situation, — whether blustering or cringing, — whether persecuting Protestants or Catholics, — they were equally unprincipled and inhuman. The part which the Church played was not equally atrocious; but it must have been exquisitely diverting to a scoffer. Never were principles so loudly professed, and so flagrantly abandoned. The royal prerogative had been magnified to the skies in theological works; the doctrine of passive obedience had been preached from innumerable pulpits. The University of Oxford had sentenced the works of the most moderate constitutionalists to the flames. The accession of a Catholic King, the frightful cruelties committed in the west of England, never shook the steady loyalty of the clergy. But did they serve the King for nought? He laid his hand on them, and they cursed him to his face. He touched the revenue of a college, and the liberty of some prelates; and the whole profession set up a yell worthy of Hugh Peters himself. Oxford sent its plate to an invader with more alacrity than she had shown when Charles the First requested it. Nothing was said about the wickedness of resistance till resistance had done its work, till the anointed vicegerent of heaven had been driven away, and it had become plain that he would never be restored, or would be restored at least under strict limitations. The clergy went back, it must be owned, to their old theory, as soon as they found that it would do them no harm.

To the general baseness and profligacy of the times, Clarendon is principally indebted for his high reputation. He was, in every respect, a man unfit for his age, — at once too good for it and too bad for it. He seemed to be one of the statesmen of Elizabeth, transplanted at once to a state of society widely different from that in which the abilities of such statesmen had been serviceable. In the sixteenth century, the Royal prerogative had scarcely been called in question. A minister who held it high was in no danger, so long as he used it well. That attachment to the Crown, that extreme jealousy of popular encroachments, that love, half religious, half political, for the Church, which, from the beginning of the Long Parliament, showed itself in Clarendon, and which his sufferings, his long residence in France, and his high station in the government, served to strengthen, would, a hundred years earlier, have secured to him the favour of his sovereign without render-

ing him odious to the people. His probity, his correctness in private life, his decency of deportment, and his general ability, would not have misbecome a colleague of Walsingham and Burleigh. But in the times on which he was cast, his errors and his virtues were alike out of place. He imprisoned men without trial. He was accused of raising unlawful contributions on the people for the support of the army. The abolition of the Triennial Act was one of his favourite objects. He seems to have meditated the revival of the Star Chamber and the High Commission Court. His zeal for the prerogative made him unpopular; but it could not secure to him the favour of a master far more desirous of ease and pleasure than of power. Charles would rather have lived in exile and privacy, with abundance of money, a crowd of mimics to amuse him, and a score of mistresses, than have purchased the absolute dominion of the world by the privations and exertions to which Clarendon was constantly urging him. A councillor who was always bringing him papers and giving him advice, and who stoutly refused to compliment Lady Castlemaine, and to carry messages to Miss Stewart, soon became more hateful to him than ever Cromwell had been. Thus, considered by the people as an oppressor, by the court as a censor, the minister fell from his high office, with a ruin more violent and destructive than could ever have been his fate if he had either respected the principles of the constitution, or flattered the vices of the King.

Mr. Hallam has formed, we think, a most correct estimate of the character and administration of Clarendon. But he scarcely makes sufficient allowance for the wear and tear which honesty almost necessarily sustains in the friction of political life, and which, in times so rough as those through which Clarendon passed, must be very considerable. When these are fairly estimated, we think that his integrity may be allowed to pass muster. A high-minded man he certainly was not, either in public or in private affairs. His own account of his conduct in the affair of his daughter is the most extraordinary passage in autobiography. We except nothing even in the Confessions of Rousseau. Several writers have taken a perverted and absurd pride in representing themselves as detestable; but no other ever laboured hard to make himself despicable and ridiculous. In one important particular, Clarendon showed as little regard to the honour of his country as he had shown to that of his family. He accepted a subsidy from France for the relief of Portugal: but this method of obtaining money was afterwards practised to a much greater extent, and for objects much less respectable, both by the Court and by the Opposition.

These pecuniary transactions are commonly considered as the most disgraceful part of the history of those times; and they were no doubt highly reprehensible. Yet, in justice to the Whigs, and to Charles himself, we must admit that they were not so shameful or atrocious as at the present day they appear. The effect of violent animosities between parties has always been, an indifference to the general welfare and honour of the state. A politician, where factions run high, is interested, not for the whole people, but for his own section of it. The rest are, in his view, strangers, enemies, or rather pirates. The strongest aversion which he can feel to any foreign power is the ardour of friendship, compared with the loathing which he entertains towards those domestic foes with whom he is cooped up in a narrow space, with whom he lives in a constant interchange of petty injuries and insults, and from whom, in the day of their success, he has to expect severities far be-

yond any that a conqueror from a distant country would inflict. Thus, in Greece, it was a point of honour for a man to leave his country and cleave to his party. No aristocratical citizen of Samos or Corcyra would have hesitated to call in the aid of Lacedemon. The multitude, on the contrary, looked to Athens. In the Italian states of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, from the same cause, no man was so much a Florentine or a Pisan, as a Ghibeline or a Guelf. It may be doubted whether there was a single individual who would have scrupled to raise his party from a state of depression, by opening the gates of his native city to a French or an Arragonese force. The Reformation, dividing almost every European country into two parts, produced similar effects. The Catholic was too strong for the Englishman; the Huguenot for the Frenchman. The Protestant statesmen of Scotland and France accordingly called in the aid of Elizabeth; and the Papists of the League brought a Spanish army into the very heart of France. The commotions to which the French Revolution gave rise have been followed by the same consequences. The Republicans in every part of Europe were eager to see the armies of the National Convention and the Directory appear among them, and exulted in defeats which distressed and humbled those whom they considered as their worst enemies — their own rulers. The princes and nobles of France, on the other hand, did their utmost to bring foreign invaders to Paris. A very short time has elapsed since the Apostolical party in Spain invoked, too successfully, the support of strangers.

The great contest which raged in England during the seventeenth century, and the earlier part of the eighteenth, extinguished, not indeed in the body of the people, but in those classes which were most actively engaged in politics, almost all national feelings. Charles the Second, and many of his courtiers, had passed a large part of their lives in banishment, serving in foreign armies, living on the bounty of foreign treasuries, soliciting foreign aid to re-establish Monarchy in their native country. The oppressed cavaliers in England constantly looked to France and Spain for deliverance and revenge. Clarendon censures the Continental Governments with great bitterness for not interfering in our internal dissensions. During the Protectorate, not only the Royalists, but the disaffected of all parties, appear to have been desirous of assistance from abroad. It is not strange, therefore, that amidst the furious contests which followed the Restoration, the violence of party feeling should produce effects which would probably have attended it even in an age less distinguished by laxity of principle and indelicacy of sentiment. It was not till a natural death had terminated the paralytic old age of the Jacobite party that the evil was completely at an end. The Whigs looked to Holland — the high Tories to France. The former concluded the Barrier Treaty — some of the latter entreated the Court of Versailles to send an expedition to England. Many men who, however erroneous their political notions might be, were unquestionably honourable in private life, accepted money without scruple from the foreign powers favourable to the Pretender.

Never was there less of national feeling among the higher orders than during the reign of Charles the Second. That Prince, on the one side, thought it better to be the deputy of an absolute King than the King of a free people. Algernon Sydney, on the other hand, would gladly have aided France in all her ambitious schemes, and have seen England reduced to the condition of a province, in the wild hope that

a foreign despot would assist him to establish his darling republic. The King took the money of France, to assist him in the enterprise which he meditated against the liberty of his subjects, with as little scruple as Frederic of Prussia or Alexander of Russia accepted our subsidies in time of war. The leaders of the Opposition no more thought themselves disgraced by the presents of Lewis, than a gentleman of our own time thinks himself disgraced by the liberality of a powerful and wealthy member of his party who pays his election bill. The money which the King received from France had been largely employed to corrupt members of Parliament. The enemies of the court might think it fair, or even absolutely necessary, to encounter bribery with bribery. Thus they took the French gratuities, the needy among them for their own use, the rich probably for the general purposes of the party, without any scruple. If we compare their conduct, not with that of English statesmen in our own time, but with that of persons in those foreign countries which are now situated as England then was, we shall probably see reason to abate something of the severity of censure with which it has been the fashion to visit those proceedings. Yet, when every allowance is made, the transaction is sufficiently offensive. It is satisfactory to find that Lord Russel stands free from any imputation of personal participation in the spoil. An age so miserably poor in all the moral qualities which render public characters respectable can ill spare the credit which it derives from a man, not indeed conspicuous for talents or knowledge, but honest even in his errors, respectable in every relation of life, rationally pious, steadily and placidly brave.

ON THE PERSECUTING CHARACTER OF QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GOVERNMENT.*

It is vehemently maintained by some writers of the present day, that the Government of Elizabeth persecuted neither Papists nor Puritans as such; and occasionally that the severe measures which it adopted were dictated, not by religious intolerance, but by political necessity. Even the excellent account of those times which Mr. Hallam has given has not altogether imposed silence on the authors of this fallacy. The title of the Queen, they say, was annulled by the Pope; her throne was given to another; her subjects were incited to rebellion; her life was menaced; every Catholic was bound in conscience to be a traitor: it was therefore against traitors, not against Catholics, that the penal laws were enacted.

That our readers may be the better able to appreciate the merits of this defence, we will state, as concisely as possible, the substance of some of these laws.

As soon as Elizabeth ascended the throne, and before the least hostility to her government had been shown by the Catholic population, an act passed, prohibiting the celebration of the rites of the Romish

* Hallam's Constitutional History of England.—Vol. xlviii. page 100. September, 1828.

Church, on pain of forfeiture for the first offence, a year's imprisonment for the second, and perpetual imprisonment for the third.

A law was next made in 1562, enacting, that all who had ever graduated at the Universities, or received holy orders, all lawyers, and all magistrates, should take the oath of supremacy when tendered to them, on pain of forfeiture, and imprisonment during the royal pleasure. After the lapse of three months, it might again be tendered to them; and, if it were again refused, the recusant was guilty of high treason! A prospective law, however severe, framed to exclude Catholics from the liberal professions, would have been mercy itself compared with this odious act. It is a retrospective statute;—it is a retrospective penal statute;—it is a retrospective penal statute against a large class. We will not positively affirm that a law of this description must always, and under all circumstances, be unjustifiable. But the presumption against it is most violent; nor do we remember any crisis, either in our own history or in the history of any other country, which would have rendered such a provision necessary. But in the present, what circumstances called for extraordinary rigour? There might be disaffection among the Catholics. The prohibition of their worship would naturally produce it. But it is from their situation, not from their conduct, from the wrongs which they had suffered, not from those which they had committed, that the existence of discontent among them must be inferred. There were libels, no doubt, and prophecies, and rumours, and suspicions,—strange grounds for a law inflicting capital penalties, *ex post facto*, on a large order of men.

Eight years later, the bull of Pius, deposing Elizabeth, produced a third law. This law, to which alone, as we conceive, the defence now under our consideration can apply, provides, that if any Catholic shall convert a Protestant to the Romish Church, they shall both suffer death, as for high treason.

We believe that we might safely content ourselves with stating the fact, and leaving it to the judgment of every plain Englishman. Recent controversies have, however, given so much importance to this subject, that we will offer a few remarks on it.

In the first place, the arguments which are urged in favour of Elizabeth apply with much greater force to the case of her sister Mary. The Catholics did not, at the time of Elizabeth's accession, rise in arms to seat a Pretender on her throne. But before Mary had given, or could give, provocation, the most distinguished Protestants attempted to set aside her rights in favour of the Lady Jane. That attempt, and the subsequent insurrection of Wyatt, furnished at least as good a plea for the burning of Protestants, as the conspiracies against Elizabeth furnish for the hanging and embowelling of Papists.

The fact is, that both pleas are worthless alike. If such arguments are to pass current, it will be easy to prove that there was never such a thing as religious persecution since the creation. For there never was a religious persecution in which some odious crime was not, justly or unjustly, said to be obviously deducible from the doctrines of the persecuted party. We might say, that the Cæsars did not persecute the Christians; that they only punished men who were charged, rightly or wrongly, with burning Rome, and with committing the foulest abominations in their assemblies; that the refusal to throw frankincense on the altar of Jupiter was not the crime, but only evidence of the crime. We might say, that the massacre of St. Bartholomew was in-

tended to extirpate, not a religious sect, but a political party. For, beyond all doubt, the proceedings of the Huguenots, from the conspiracy of Amboise to the battle of Moncouth, had given much more trouble to the French monarchy than the Catholics have ever given to England since the Reformation, and that, too, with much less excuse.

The true distinction is perfectly obvious. To punish a man because he has committed a crime, or is believed, though unjustly, to have committed a crime, is not persecution. To punish a man because we infer from the nature of some doctrine which he holds, or from the conduct of other persons who hold the same doctrines with him, that he will commit a crime, is persecution, and is, in every case, foolish and wicked.

When Elizabeth put Ballard and Babington to death, she was not persecuting. Nor should we have accused her government of persecution for passing any law, however severe, against overt acts of sedition. But to argue that, because a man is a Catholic he must think it right to murder an heretical sovereign, and that because he thinks it right he will attempt to do it,—and then to found on this conclusion a law for punishing him as if he had done it,—is plain persecution.

If, indeed, all men reasoned in the same manner on the same data, and always did what they thought it their duty to do, this mode of dispensing punishment might be extremely judicious. But as people who agree about premises often disagree about conclusions, and as no man in the world acts up to his own standard of right, there are two enormous gaps in the logic, by which alone penalties for opinions can be defended. The doctrine of reprobation, in the judgment of many very able men, follows by syllogistic necessity from the doctrine of election. Others conceive that the Antinomian and Manichean heresies directly follow from the doctrine of reprobation; and it is very generally thought that licentiousness and cruelty of the worst description are likely to be the fruits, as they often have been the fruits, of Antinomian and Manichean opinions. This chain of reasoning, we think, is as perfect in all its parts as that which makes out a Papist to be necessarily a traitor. Yet it would be rather a strong measure to hang the Calvinists, on the ground that, if they were spared, they would infallibly commit all the atrocities of Matthias and Knipperdoling. For, reason the matter as we may, experience shows us that a man may believe in election without believing in reprobation, that he may believe in reprobation without being an Antinomian, and that he may be an Antinomian without being a bad citizen. Man, in short, is so inconsistent a creature, that it is impossible to reason from his belief to his conduct, or from one part of his belief to another.

We do not believe that every Englishman who was reconciled to the Catholic Church would, as a necessary consequence, have thought himself justified in deposing or assassinating Elizabeth. It is not sufficient to say, that the convert must have acknowledged the authority of the Pope; and that the Pope had issued a bull against the Queen. We know through what strange loop-holes the human mind contrives to escape, when it wishes to avoid a disagreeable inference from an admitted proposition. We know how long the Jansenists contrived to believe the Pope infallible in matters of doctrine, and at the same time to believe doctrines which he pronounced to be heretical. Let it pass, however, that every Catholic in the kingdom thought that Elizabeth might be lawfully murdered. Still the old maxim, that what is the

business of everybody is the business of nobody, is particularly likely to hold good in a case in which a cruel death is the almost inevitable consequence of making any attempt.

Of the ten thousand clergymen of the Church of England, there is scarcely one who would not say that a man who should leave his country and friends to preach the gospel among savages, and who should, after labouring indefatigably, without any hope of reward, terminate his life by martyrdom, would deserve the warmest admiration. Yet we doubt whether ten of the ten thousand ever thought of going on such an expedition. Why should we suppose that conscientious motives, feeble as they are constantly found to be in a good cause, should be omnipotent for evil? Doubtless there was many a jolly Popish priest in the old manor-houses of the northern counties, who would have admitted, in theory, the deposing power of the Pope, but who would not have been ambitious to be stretched on the rack, even though it were to be used, according to the benevolent proviso of Lord Burleigh, ‘as charitably as such a thing can be;’ or to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, even though, by that rare indulgence which the Queen, of her special grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, sometimes extended to very mitigated cases, he were allowed a fair time to choke before the hangman began to grabble in his entrails.

But the laws passed against the Puritans had not even the wretched excuse which we have been considering. In their case, the cruelty was equal; the danger infinitely less. In fact the danger was created solely by the cruelty. But it is superfluous to press the argument. By no artifice of ingenuity can the stigma of persecution, the worst blemish of the English Church, be effaced or patched over. Her doctrines, we well know, do not tend to intolerance. She admits the possibility of salvation out of her own pale. But this circumstance, in itself honourable to her, aggravates the sin and the shame of those who persecuted in her name. Dominic and De Monfort did not, at least, murder and torture for differences of opinion which they considered as trifling. It was to stop an infection which, as they believed, hurried to perdition every soul which it seized, that they employed their fire and steel. The measures of the English government with respect to the Papists and Puritans sprang from a widely different principle. If those who deny that the supporters of the Established Church were guilty of religious persecution, mean only that they were not influenced by religious motives, we perfectly agree with them. Neither the penal code of Elizabeth, nor the more hateful system by which Charles the Second attempted to force Episcopacy on the Scotch, had an origin so noble. Their cause is to be sought in some circumstances which attended the Reformation in England — circumstances of which the effects long continued to be felt, and may in some degree be traced even at the present day.

In Germany, in France, in Switzerland, and in Scotland, the contest against the Papal power was essentially a religious contest. In all these countries, indeed, the cause of the Reformation, like every other great cause, attracted to itself many supporters influenced by no conscientious principle, — many who quitted the Established Church only because they thought her in danger, — many who were weary of her restraints, — and many who were greedy for her spoils. But it was not by these adherents that the separation was there conducted. They were welcome auxiliaries; their support was too often purchased by unworthy

compliances ; but, however exalted in rank or power, they were not the leaders in the enterprise. Men of a widely different description ; men who redeemed great infirmities and errors by sincerity, disinterestedness, energy, and courage ; men who, with many of the vices of revolutionary chiefs and of polemic divines, united some of the highest qualities of apostles, were the real directors. They might be violent in innovation, and scurrilous in controversy. They might sometimes act with inexcusable severity towards opponents, and sometimes connive disreputably at the vices of powerful allies. But fear was not in them, nor hypocrisy, nor avarice, nor any petty selfishness. Their one great object was the demolition of the idols, and the purification of the sanctuary. If they were too indulgent to the failings of eminent men, from whose patronage they expected advantage to the church, they never flinched before persecuting tyrants and hostile armies. If they set the lives of others at nought in comparison of their doctrines, they were equally ready to throw away their own. Such were the authors of the great schism on the continent and in the northern part of this island. The Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse, the Prince of Condé and the King of Navarre, Moray and Morton, might espouse the Protestant opinions, or might pretend to espouse them ; — but it was from Luther, from Calvin, from Knox, that the Reformation took its character.

England has no such names to show ; not that she wanted men of sincere piety, of deep learning, of steady and adventurous courage. But these were thrown into the back ground. Elsewhere men of this character were the principals. Here they acted a secondary part. Elsewhere worldliness was the tool of zeal. Here zeal was the tool of worldliness. A King, whose character may be best described by saying that he was despotism itself personified, unprincipled ministers, a rapacious aristocracy, a servile Parliament, — such were the instruments by which England was delivered from the yoke of Rome. The work which had been begun by Henry, the murderer of his wives, was continued by Somerset, the murderer of his brother, and completed by Elizabeth, the murderer of her guest. Sprung from brutal passion, — nurtured by selfish policy, — the Reformation in England displayed little of what had, in other countries, distinguished it, — unflinching and unsparing devotion, boldness of speech, and singleness of eye. These were indeed to be found ; but it was in the lower ranks of the party which opposed the authority of Rome, in such men as Hooper, Latimer, Rogers, and Taylor. Of those who had any important share in bringing the alteration about, the excellent Ridley was perhaps the only person who did not consider it as a mere political job. Even Ridley did not play a very prominent part. Among the statesmen and prelates who principally gave the tone to the religious changes, there is one, and one only, whose conduct partiality itself can attribute to any other than interested motives. It is not strange, therefore, that his character should have been the subject of fierce controversy. We need not say that we speak of Cranmer.

Mr. Hallam has been severely censured for saying, with his usual placid severity, that ‘ if we weigh the character of this prelate in an equal balance, he will appear far indeed removed from the turpitude imputed to him by his enemies ; yet not entitled to any extraordinary veneration.’ We will venture to expand the sense of Mr. Hallam, and to comment on it thus : If we consider Cranmer merely as a states-

man, he will not appear a much worse man than Wolsey, Gardiner, Cromwell, or Somerset. But when an attempt is made to set him up as a saint, it is scarcely possible for any man of sense, who knows the history of the times well, to preserve his gravity. If the memory of the Archbishop had been left to find its own place, he would soon have been lost among the crowd which is mingled —

‘ A quel cattivo coro
Degli’ angeli, che non furon ribelli,
Nè fur fedeli a Dio, ma per se furo.’

And the only notice which it would have been necessary to take of his name, would have been

‘ Non ragioniam di lui ; ma guarda, e passa.’

But when his admirers challenge for him a place in the noble army of martyrs, his claims require fuller discussion.

The shameful origin of his history, common enough in the scandalous chronicles of courts, seems strangely out of place in a hagiology. Cranmer rose into favour by serving Henry in the disgraceful affair of his first divorce. He promoted the marriage of Anne Boleyn with the King. On a frivolous pretence he pronounced it null and void. On a pretence, if possible, still more frivolous, he dissolved the ties which bound the shameless tyrant to Anne of Cleves. He attached himself to Cromwell, while the fortunes of Cromwell flourished. He voted for cutting off his head without a trial, when the tide of royal favour turned. He conformed backwards and forwards as the King changed his mind. While Henry lived, he assisted in condemning to the flames those who denied the doctrine of transubstantiation. When Henry died, he found out that the doctrine was false. He was, however, not at a loss for people to burn. The authority of his station, and of his grey hairs, was employed to overcome the disgust with which an intelligent and virtuous child regarded persecution.

Intolerance is always bad. But the sanguinary intolerance of a man, who thus wavered in his creed, excites a loathing, to which it is difficult to give vent without calling foul names. Equally false to political and to religious obligations, he was first the tool of Somerset, and then the tool of Northumberland. When the former wished to put his own brother to death, without even the form of a trial, he found a ready instrument in Cranmer. In spite of the canon law, which forbade a churchman to take any part in matters of blood, the Archbishop signed the warrant for the atrocious sentence. When Somerset had been in his turn destroyed, his destroyer received the support of Cranmer in his attempt to change the course of the succession.

The apology made for him by his admirers only renders his conduct more contemptible. He complied, it is said, against his better judgment, because he could not resist the entreaties of Edward ! A holy prelate of sixty, one would think, might be better employed by the bedside of a dying child, than in committing crimes at the request of his disciple. If he had shown half as much firmness when Edward requested him to commit treason, as he had before shown when Edward requested him not to commit murder, he might have saved the country from one of the greatest misfortunes that it ever underwent. He became, from whatever motive, the accomplice of the worthless Dudley. The virtuous scruples of another young and amiable mind were to be overcome. As Edward had been forced into persecution, Jane was to

be seduced into usurpation. No transaction in our annals is more unjustifiable than this. If a hereditary title were to be respected, Mary possessed it. If a parliamentary title were preferable, Mary possessed that also. If the interest of the Protestant religion required a departure from the ordinary rule of succession, that interest would have been best served by raising Elizabeth to the throne. If the foreign relations of the kingdom were considered, still stronger reasons might be found for preferring Elizabeth to Jane. There was great doubt whether Jane or the Queen of Scotland had the better claim; and that doubt would, in all probability, have produced a war, both with Scotland and with France, if the project of Northumberland had not been blasted in its infancy. That Elizabeth had a better claim than the Queen of Scotland was indisputable. To the part which Cranmer, and unfortunately some better men than Cranmer, took in this most reprehensible scheme, much of the severity with which the Protestants were afterwards treated must in fairness be ascribed.

The plot failed: Popery triumphed; and Cranmer recanted. Most people look on his recantation as a single blemish on an honourable life — the frailty of an unguarded moment. But, in fact, it was in strict accordance with the system on which he had constantly acted. It was part of a regular habit. It was not the first recantation that he had made; and in all probability, if it had answered its purpose, it would not have been the last. We do not blame him for not choosing to be burnt alive. It is no very severe reproach to any person that he does not possess heroic fortitude. But surely a man who liked the fire so little should have had some sympathy for others. A persecutor who inflicts nothing which he is not ready to endure, deserves some respect. But when a man who loves his doctrines more than the lives of his neighbours, loves his own little finger better than his doctrines, a very simple argument, *à fortiori*, will enable us to estimate the amount of his benevolence.

But his martyrdom, it is said, redeemed every thing. It is extraordinary that so much ignorance should exist on this subject. The fact is, that if a martyr be a man who chooses to die rather than to renounce his opinions, Cranmer was no more a martyr than Dr. Dodd. He died solely because he could not help it. He never retracted his recantation till he found he had made it in vain. The Queen was fully resolved that, Catholic or Protestant, he should burn. Then he spoke out, as people generally speak out when they are at the point of death, and have nothing to hope or to fear on earth. If Mary had suffered him to live, we suspect that he would have heard mass and received absolution, like a good Catholic, till the accession of Elizabeth; and that he would then have purchased, by another apostacy, the power of burning men better and braver than himself.

We do not mean, however, to represent him as a monster of wickedness. He was not wantonly cruel or treacherous. He was merely a supple, timid, interested courtier, in times of frequent and violent change. That which has always been represented as his distinguishing virtue, the facility with which he forgave his enemies, belongs to the character. Those of his class are never vindictive, and never grateful. A present interest effaces past services and past injuries from their minds together. Their only object is self-preservation; and for this they conciliate those who wrong them, just as they abandon those who serve

them. Before we extol a man for his forgiving temper, we should inquire whether he is above revenge, or below it.

Somerset, with as little principle as his coadjutor, had a firmer and more commanding mind. Of Henry, an orthodox Catholic, excepting that he chose to be his own Pope, and of Elizabeth, who certainly had no objection to the theology of Rome, we need say nothing. But these four persons were the great authors of the English Reformation. Three of them had a direct interest in the extension of the royal prerogative. The fourth was the ready tool of any who could frighten him. It is not difficult to see from what motives, and on what plan, such persons would be inclined to remodel the Church. The scheme was merely to rob the Babylonian enchantress of her ornaments, to transfer the full cup of her sorceries to other hands, spilling as little as possible by the way. The Catholic doctrines and rites were to be retained in the Church of England; but the King was to exercise the control which had formerly belonged to the Roman Pontiff. In this Henry for a time succeeded. The extraordinary force of his character, the fortunate situation in which he stood with respect to foreign powers, and the vast resources which the suppression of the monasteries placed at his disposal, enabled him to oppress both the religious factions equally. He punished with impartial severity those who renounced the doctrines of Rome, and those who acknowledged her jurisdiction. The basis, however, on which he attempted to establish his power, was too narrow. It would have been impossible even for him long to persecute both persuasions. Even under his reign there had been insurrections on the part of the Catholics, and signs of a spirit which was likely soon to produce insurrection on the part of the Protestants. It was plainly necessary, therefore, that the government should form an alliance with one or with the other side. To recognise the Papal supremacy would have been to abandon its whole design. Reluctantly and sullenly it at last joined the Protestants. In forming this junction, its object was to procure as much aid as possible for its selfish undertaking, and to make the smallest possible concessions to the spirit of religious innovation.

From this compromise the Church of England sprung. In many respects, indeed, it has been well for her, that in an age of exuberant zeal, her principal founders were mere politicians. To this circumstance she owes her moderate articles, her decent ceremonies, her noble and pathetic liturgy. Her worship is not disfigured by mummery. Yet she has preserved, in a far greater degree than any of her Protestant sisters, that art of striking the senses, and filling the imagination, in which the Catholic Church so eminently excels. But, on the other hand, she continued to be, for more than a hundred and fifty years, the servile handmaid of monarchy, the steady enemy of public liberty. The divine right of kings, and the duty of passively obeying all their commands, were her favourite tenets. She held them firmly through times of oppression, persecution, and licentiousness; while law was trampled down; while judgment was perverted; while the people were eaten as though they were bread. Once, and but once, — for a moment, and but for a moment, — when her own dignity and property were touched, she forgot to practise the submission which she had taught.

Elizabeth clearly discerned the advantages which were to be derived from a close connexion between the monarchy and the priesthood.

At the time of her accession, indeed, she evidently meditated a partial reconciliation with Rome. And throughout her whole life, she leaned strongly to some of the most obnoxious parts of the Catholic system. But her imperious temper, her keen sagacity, and her peculiar situation, soon led her to attach herself completely to a church which was all her own. On the same principle on which she joined it, she attempted to drive all her people within its pale by persecution. She supported it by severe penal laws, not because she thought conformity to its discipline necessary to salvation; but because it was the fastness which arbitrary power was making strong for itself;—because she expected a more profound obedience from those who saw in her both their civil and their ecclesiastical head, than from those who, like the Papists, ascribed spiritual authority to the Pope, or from those who, like some of the Puritans, ascribed it only to Heaven. To dissent from her establishment was to dissent from an institution founded with an express view to the maintenance and extension of the royal prerogative.

This great Queen and her successors, by considering conformity and loyalty as identical, at length made them so. With respect to the Catholics, indeed, the rigour of persecution abated after her death. James soon found that they were unable to injure him; and that the animosity which the Puritan party felt towards them, drove them of necessity to take refuge under his throne. During the subsequent conflict, their fault was any thing but disloyalty. On the other hand, James hated the Puritans with far more than the hatred of Elizabeth. Her aversion to them was political,—his was personal. The sect had plagued him in Scotland, where he was weak; and he was determined to be even with them in England, where he was powerful. Persecution gradually changed a sect into a faction. That there was any thing in the religious opinions of the Puritans, which rendered them hostile to monarchy, has never been proved to our satisfaction. After our civil contests, it became the fashion to say that Presbyterianism was connected with Republicanism; just as it has been the fashion to say, since the time of the French Revolution, that Infidelity is connected with Republicanism. It is perfectly true, that a church constituted on the Calvinistic model, will not strengthen the hands of the sovereign so much as a hierarchy, which consists of several ranks, differing in dignity and emolument, and of which all the members are constantly looking to the government for promotion. But experience has clearly shown that a Calvinistic Church, like every other church, is disaffected when it is persecuted, quiet when it is tolerated, and actively loyal when it is favoured and cherished. Scotland has had a Presbyterian establishment during a century and a half; yet her General Assembly has not, during that period, given half so much trouble to the Government as the Convocation of the Church of England gave to it during the thirty years which followed the Revolution. That James and Charles should have been mistaken in this point is not surprising. But we are astonished, we must confess, when writers of our own time, men who have before them the proof of what toleration can effect,—men who may see with their own eyes that the Presbyterians are no such monsters, when government is wise enough to let them alone, should defend the old persecutions, on the ground that they were indispensable to the safety of the church and the throne.

How persecution protects churches and thrones was soon made manifest. A systematic political opposition, vehement, daring, and inflexible, sprang from a schism about trifles, altogether unconnected with the real interests of religion or of the state. Before the close of the reign of Elizabeth it began to show itself. It broke forth on the question of the monopolies. Even the imperial Lioness was compelled to abandon her prey, and slowly and fiercely to recede before the assailants. The spirit of liberty grew with the growing wealth and intelligence of the people. The feeble struggles and insults of James irritated instead of suppressing it. And the events which immediately followed the accession of his son portended a contest, of no common severity, between a King resolved to be absolute, and a people resolved to be free.*

* It was my intention to select more copiously from the historical department of the Edinburgh Review. The length of the articles precludes the possibility of doing so; and it would be impracticable to condense them without breaking the connexion necessary to preserve undiminished the interest of the narrative. In consequence of this, I have been reluctantly compelled to exclude many useful Essays. I beg to direct the reader's attention to the following:—History of the Deposition of the King of Sweden. Vol. xxi. page 152.—Abstract of the Life of James the 2nd, containing a mass of very curious information concerning that Monarch, not to be found in any other Biography of him. It was compiled from the Stuart MSS. in Carlton House. Vol. xxvi. page 402.—Exposure of Hume's Prejudices and Inconsistencies as an Historian. Vol. xl. page 92. This elaborate Dissertation is a Review of Brodie's Life of Charles the 1st, and has been ascribed, I believe on unquestionable authority, to Sir James Mackintosh.—History of the Cortes of Spain, Vol. xxiii. page 347.—A Discussion of the long-contested Question, *Who wrote Icon Basilike*. Vol. xlv. page 1.—Historical Account of the Political Affairs of Portugal down to the Period of Canning's Administration. Vol. xlv. page 199.—Constitutional History has afforded materials for a series of excellent papers contributed by writers eminently qualified for investigations of that kind. See the Reviews of Oldfield's Representative History of Great Britain, Vol. xxvi. page 338.; A History of the English Legislature, Vol. xxxv. page 1.; and of the Antient English Commons, Vol. xxxvi. page 287.

PART THIRD.

MISCELLANEOUS LITERATURE.

STATE OF GERMAN LITERATURE. SKETCHES OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED WRITERS.*

ABOVE a century ago, the Père Bouhours propounded to himself the pregnant question: *Si un Allemand peut avoir de l'esprit?* Had the Père Bouhours bethought him of what country Kepler and Leibnitz were, or who it was that gave to mankind the three great elements of modern civilization, Gunpowder, Printing, and the Protestant Religion, it might have thrown light on his inquiry. Had he known the *Nibelungen Lied*; and where *Reinecke Fuchs*, and *Faust*, and the *Ship of Fools*, and four-fifths of all the popular mythology, humour, and romance to be found in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, took its rise; had he read a page or two of Ulrich Hutten, Opitz, Paul Flemming, Logau, or even Lohenstein and Hoffmannswaldau, all of whom had already lived and written in his day; had the Père Bouhours taken this trouble,—who knows but he might have found, with whatever amazement, that a German *could* actually have a little *esprit*, or perhaps even something better? No such trouble was requisite for the Père Bouhours. Motion *in vacuo* is well known to be speedier and surer than through a resisting medium, especially to imponderous bodies; and so the light Jesuit, unimpeded by facts or principles of any kind, failed not to reach his conclusion, and, in a comfortable frame of mind, to decide, negatively, that a German could *not* have any literary talent.

Thus did the Père Bouhours evince that he had ‘a pleasant wit;’ but in the end he has paid dear for it. The French, themselves, have long since begun to know something of the Germans, and something also of their critical Daniel; and now it is by this one *untimely* joke that the hapless Jesuit is doomed to live; for the blessing of full oblivion is denied him, and so he hangs, suspended in his own noose, over the dusky pool which he struggles toward, but for a great while will not reach. Might his fate but serve as a warning to kindred men of wit, in regard to this and so many other subjects! For surely the pleasure of despising, at all times and in itself a dangerous luxury, is much safer *after* the toil of examining than before it.

We differ from the Père Bouhours in this matter, and must endeavour to discuss it differently. There is, in fact, much in the present aspect of German Literature not only deserving notice, but deep consideration from all thinking men, and far too complex for being handled in the way of epigram. It is always advantageous to think justly of our neighbours, nay, in mere common honesty, it is a duty; and, like every other duty, brings its own reward. Perhaps at the present era this duty is more essential than ever; an era of such promise and such threaten-

* Outlines for the History and Criticism of Polite Literature in Germany; by Franz Horn.—Vol. xlv. page 306. October, 1827.

ing,—when so many elements of good and evil are everywhere in conflict, and human society is, as it were, struggling to body itself forth anew, and so many *coloured rays* are springing up in this quarter and in that, which only by their union can produce *pure light*. Happily too, though still a difficult, it is no longer an impossible duty; for the commerce in material things has paved roads for commerce in things spiritual, and a true thought, or a noble creation, passes lightly to us from the remotest countries, provided only our minds be open to receive it. This, indeed is a rigorous proviso, and a great obstacle lies in it; one which to many must be insurmountable, yet which it is the chief glory of social culture to surmount. For, if a man, who mistakes his own contracted individuality for the type of human nature, and deals with whatever contradicts *him* as if it contradicted *this*, is but a pedant, and without true wisdom, be he furnished with partial equipments as he may,—what better shall we think of a nation that, in like manner, isolates itself from foreign influence, regards its own modes as so many laws of nature, and rejects all that is different as unworthy even of examination.

Of this narrow and perverted condition the French, down almost to our own times, have afforded a remarkable and instructive example; as indeed of late they have been often enough upbraidingly reminded, and are now themselves, in a manlier spirit, beginning to admit. That our countrymen have at any time erred much in this point cannot, we think, truly be alleged against them. Neither shall we say with some passionate admirers of Germany, that to the Germans in particular they have been unjust. It is true, the literature and character of that country, which, within the last half century, have been more worthy perhaps than any other of our study and regard, are still very generally unknown to us, or, what is worse, misknown; but for this there are not wanting less offensive reasons. That the false and tawdry ware, which was in all hands, should reach us before the chaste and truly excellent, which it required some excellence to recognise; that Kotzebue's insanity should have spread faster, by some fifty years, than Lessing's wisdom; that Kant's Philosophy should stand in the background as a dreary and abortive dream, and Gall's Craniology be held out to us from every booth as a reality;—all this lay in the nature of the case. That many readers should draw conclusions from imperfect premises, and by the imports judge too hastily of the stock imported from, was likewise natural. No unfair bias, no unwise indisposition, that we are aware of, has ever been at work in the matter; perhaps at worst, a degree of indolence, a blameable incuriosity to all products of foreign genius: for what more do we know of recent Spanish or Italian literature than of German; of Grossi and Manzoni, of Campomanes or Jovellanos, than of Tieck and Richter? Wherever German art, in those forms of it which need no interpreter, has addressed us immediately, our recognition of it has been prompt and hearty; from Dürer to Mengs, from Händel to Weber and Beethoven, we have welcomed the painters and musicians of Germany, not only to our praise, but to our affections and beneficence. Nor, if in their literature we have been more backward, is the literature itself without share in the blame. Two centuries ago, translations from the German were comparatively frequent in England: Luther's *Table-Talk* is still a venerable classic in our language; nay Jacob Böhme has found a place among us, and this not as a dead letter, but as a living apostle to a still living sect of our religionists. In the

next century, indeed, translation ceased ; but then it was in a great measure because there was little worth translating. The horrors of the Thirty Years' War, followed by the conquests and conflagrations of Louis the Fourteenth, had desolated the country ; French influence, extending from the courts of princes to the closets of the learned, lay like a baleful incubus over the far nobler mind of Germany ; and all true nationality vanished from its literature, or was heard only in faint tones, which lived in the hearts of the people, but could not reach with any effect to the ears of foreigners.* And now that the genius of the country has awaked in its old strength, our attention to it has certainly awakened also ; and if we yet know little or nothing of the Germans, it is not because we wilfully do them wrong, but in good part because they are somewhat difficult to know.

In fact, prepossessions of all sorts naturally enough find their place here. A country which has no national literature, or a literature too insignificant to force its way abroad, must always be, to its neighbours, at least in every important spiritual respect, an unknown and misestimated country. Its towns may figure on our maps ; its revenues, population, manufactures, political connexions, may be recorded in statistical books : but the character of the people has no symbol and

* Not that the Germans were idle, or altogether engaged, as we too loosely suppose, in the work of commentary and lexicography. On the contrary, they rhymed and romanced with due vigour as to quantity ; only the quality was bad. Two facts on this head may deserve mention : In the year 1749, there were found in the library of one virtuoso no fewer than 300 volumes of devotional poetry, containing, says Horn, ' a treasure of 33,712 German hymns ;' and much about the same period, one of Gottsched's scholars had amassed as many as 1500 German novels, all of the 17th century. The hymns we understand to be much better than the novels, or rather, perhaps, the novels to be much worse than the hymns. Neither was critical study neglected, nor indeed honest endeavour on all hands to attain improvement : witness the strange books from time to time put forth, and the still stranger institutions established for this purpose. Among the former, we have the ' Poetical Funnel' (*Poetische Trichter*), manufactured at Nürnberg in 1650, and professing, within six hours, to pour in the whole essence of this difficult art into the most unfurnished head. Nürnberg also was the chief seat of the famous *Meistersänger* and their *Sängerzünfte*, or Singer-guilds, in which poetry was taught and practised, like any other handicraft, and this by sober and well-meaning men, chiefly artisans, who could not understand why labour, which manufactured so many things, should not also manufacture another. Of these tuneful guild-brethren, Hans Sachs, by trade a shoemaker, is greatly the most noted and most notable. His father was a tailor ; he himself learned the mystery of song under one Nunnebeck, a weaver. He was an adherent of his great contemporary Luther, who has even deigned to acknowledge his services in the cause of the Reformation : how diligent a labourer Sachs must have been, will appear from the fact, that in his 74th year (1568), on examining his stock for publication, he found that he had written 6048 poetical pieces, among which were 208 tragedies and comedies : and this besides having all along kept house, like an honest Nürnberg burgher, by assiduous and sufficient shoe-making ! Hans is not without genius, and a shrewd irony ; and above all, the most gay, child-like, yet devout and solid character. A man neither to be despised nor patronised, but left standing on his own basis, as a singular product, and a still legible symbol, and clear mirror, of the time and country where he lived. His best piece known to us, and many are well worth perusing, is the *Fastnachtspiel* (Shrovetide Farce) of the *Narrenschneiden*, where a doctor cures a bloated and lethargic patient by cutting out half a dozen *Fools* from his interior !

no voice; we cannot know them by speech and discourse, but only by mere sight and outward observation of their manners and procedure. Now, if both sight and speech, if both travellers and native literature, are found but ineffectual in this respect, how incalculably more so the former alone! To seize a character, even that of one man, in its life and secret mechanism, requires a philosopher; to delineate it with truth and impressiveness is work for a poet. How then shall one or two sleek clerical tutors, with here and there a tedium-stricken esquire, or speculative half-pay captain, give us views on such a subject? How shall a man, to whom all characters of individual men are like sealed books, of which he sees only the title and the covers, decipher, from his four-wheeled vehicle, and depict to us, the character of a nation? He courageously depicts his own optical delusions; notes this to be incomprehensible, that other to be insignificant; much to be good, much to be bad, and most of all indifferent; and so, with a few flowing strokes, completes a picture which, though it may not even resemble any possible object, his countrymen are to take for a national portrait. Nor is the fraud so readily detected: for the character of a people has such complexity of aspect, that even the honest observer knows not always, not perhaps after long inspection, what to determine regarding it. From his, only accidental, point of view, the figure stands before him like the tracings on veined marble,—a mass of mere random lines, and tints, and entangled strokes, out of which a lively fancy may shape almost *any* image. But the image he brings along with him is always the readiest; this is tried, it answers as well as another; and a second voucher now testifies its correctness. Thus each, in confident tones, though it may be with a secret misgiving, repeats his precursor; the hundred times repeated comes in the end to be believed: the foreign nation is now once for all understood, decided on, and registered accordingly; and dunces the thousandth writes of it like dunces the first.

With the aid of literary and intellectual intercourse, much of this falsehood may, no doubt, be corrected; yet even here, sound judgment is far from easy; and most national characters are still, as Hume long ago complained, the product rather of popular prejudice than of philosophic insight. That the Germans, in particular, have by no means escaped such misrepresentation, nay perhaps have had more than the common share of it, cannot, in their circumstances, surprise us. From the times of Opitz and Flemming to those of Klopstock and Lessing,—that is, from the early part of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century,—they had scarcely any literature known abroad, or deserving to be known: their political condition, during the same period, was oppressive and every way unfortunate externally; and at home, the nation, split into so many factions and petty states, had lost all feeling of itself as of a nation; and its energies in arts as in arms were manifested only in detail, too often in collision, and always under foreign influence. The French, at once their plunderers and their scoffers, described them to the rest of Europe as a semi-barbarous people; which comfortable fact the rest of Europe was willing enough to take on their word. During the greater part of last century, the Germans, in our intellectual survey of the world, were quietly omitted; a vague contemptuous ignorance prevailed respecting them; it was a Cimmerian land, where, if a few sparks did glimmer, it was but so as to testify their

own existence, too feebly to enlighten *us*.* The Germans passed for apprentices in all provinces of art; and many foreign craftsmen scarcely allowed them so much.

Madame de Stael's book has done away with this: all Europe is now aware that the Germans are something; something independent, and apart from others; nay, something deep, imposing, and if not admirable, wonderful. What that something is, indeed, is still undecided; for this gifted lady's *Allemagne*, in doing much to excite curiosity, has still done little to satisfy or even direct it. We can no longer make ignorance a boast, but we are yet far from having acquired right knowledge; and cavillers, excluded from contemptuous negation, have found a resource in almost as contemptuous assertion. Translators are the same faithless and stolid race that they have ever been: the particle of gold they bring us over is hidden, from all but the most patient eye, among shiploads of yellow sand and sulphur. Gentle Dulness too, in this as in all other things, still loves her joke. The Germans, though much more attended to, are perhaps not less mistaken than before.

Doubtless, however, there is in this increased attention a progress towards the truth; which it is only investigation and discussion that can help us to find. The study of German literature has already taken such firm root among us, and is spreading so visibly, that by and by, as we believe, the true character of it must and will become known. A result, which is to bring us into closer and friendlier union with forty millions of civilized men, cannot surely be otherwise than desirable. If they have precious truth to impart, we shall receive it as the highest of all gifts; if error, we shall not only reject it, but explain it and trace out its origin, and so help our brethren also to reject it. In either point of view, and for all profitable purposes of national intercourse, correct knowledge is the first and indispensable preliminary.

Meanwhile errors of all sorts prevail on this subject: even among men of sense and liberality we have found so much hallucination, so many groundless or half-grounded objections to German literature, that the tone in which a multitude of other men speak of it cannot appear extraordinary. To much of this even a slight knowledge of the Germans would furnish a sufficient answer. But we have thought it might be useful were the chief of these objections marshalled in distinct order, and examined with what degree of light and fairness is at our disposal. In attempting this, we are vain enough, for reasons already stated, to fancy ourselves discharging what is in some sort a national duty. It is unworthy of one great people to think falsely of another; it is unjust, and therefore unworthy. Of the injury it does

* So late as the year 1811, we find, from *Pinkerton's Geography*, the sole representative of German literature to be Gottshed (with his name wrong spelt), 'who first introduced a more refined style.' Gottsched has been dead the greater part of a century, and for the last fifty years ranks among the Germans somewhat as Prynne or Alexander Ross does among ourselves. A man of a cold, rigid, perseverant character, who mistook himself for a poet and the perfection of critics, and had skill to pass current during the greater part of his literary life for such. On the strength of his Boileau and Batteux, he long reigned supreme; but it was like Night, in rayless majesty, and over a slumbering people. They awoke, before his death, and hurled him, perhaps too indignantly, into his native Abyss.

to ourselves we do not speak, for that is an inferior consideration: yet surely if the grand principle of free intercourse is so profitable in material commerce, much more must it be in the commerce of the mind, the products of which are thereby not so much transported out of one country into another, as multiplied over all, for the benefit of all, and without loss to any. If that man is a benefactor to the world who causes two ears of corn to grow where only one grew before, much more is he a benefactor who causes two truths to grow up together in harmony and mutual confirmation, where before only one stood solitary, and, on that side at least, intolerant and hostile.

In dealing with the host of objections which front us on this subject, we think it may be convenient to range them under two principal heads. The first, as respects chiefly unsoundness or imperfection of sentiment; an error which may in general be denominated *Bad Taste*. The second, as respects chiefly a wrong condition of intellect; an error which may be designated by the general title of *Mysticism*. Both of these, no doubt, are partly connected; and each, in some degree, springs from and returns into the other; yet, for present purposes, the division may be precise enough,

First, then, of the first: It is objected that the Germans have a radically bad taste. This is a deep-rooted objection, which assumes many forms, and extends through many ramifications. Among men of less acquaintance with the subject of German taste, or of taste in general, the spirit of the accusation seems to be somewhat as follows: That the Germans, with much natural susceptibility, are still in a rather coarse and uncultivated state of mind; displaying, with the energy and other virtues of a rude people, many of their vices also; in particular, a certain wild and headlong temper, which seizes on all things too hastily and impetuously; weeps, storms, loves, hates, too fiercely and vociferously; delighting in coarse excitements, such as flaring contrasts, vulgar horrors, and all sorts of showy exaggeration. Their literature in particular is thought to dwell with peculiar complacency among wizards and ruined towers, with mailed knights, secret tribunals, monks, spectres, and banditti: on the other hand, there is an undue love of moonlight, and mossy fountains, and the moral sublime: then we have descriptions of things which should not be described; a general want of tact; nay, often a hollowness, and want of sense. In short, the German Muse comports herself, it is said, like a passionate and rather fascinating, but tumultuous, uninstructed, and but half-civilized Muse. A *belle sauvage* at best, we can only love her with a sort of supercilious tolerance; often she tears a passion to rags; and in her tumid vehemence, struts without meaning, and to the offence of all literary decorum.

Now, in all this there is a certain degree of truth. If any man will insist upon taking Heinse's *Ardinghello*, and Miller's *Siegwart*, and the works of Veit Weber the younger, and above all the everlasting Kotzebue, as his specimens of German literature, he may establish many things. Black Forests, and the glories of Lubberland; sensuality and horror, the spectre nun, and the charmed moonshine, shall not be wanting. Boisterous outlaws, also, with huge whiskers, and the most cat-o'-mountain aspect; tear-stained sentimentalists, the grimmest man-haters, ghosts, and the like suspicious characters, will be found in abundance. We are little read in this bowl-and-dagger department; but we do understand it to have been at one time rather diligently

cultivated ; though at present it seems to be mostly relinquished as unproductive. Other forms of Unreason have taken its place ; which in their turn must yield to still other forms ; for it is the nature of this goddess to descend in frequent *avatars* among men. Perhaps not less than five hundred volumes of such stuff could still be collected from the bookstalls of Germany. By which truly we may learn that there is in that country a class of unwise men and unwise women ; that many readers there labour under a degree of ignorance and mental vacancy, and read not actively but passively, not to learn but to be amused. But is this fact so very new to us ? Or what should we think of a German critic that selected his specimens of British literature from the *Castle Spectre*, Mr. Lewis's *Monk*, or even the *Mysteries of Udolpho*, and *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus* ? Or would he judge rightly of our dramatic taste, if he took his extracts from Mr. Egan's *Tom and Jerry* ; and told his readers, as he might truly do, that *no* play had ever enjoyed such currency on the English stage as this most classic performance ? We think, not. In like manner, till some author of acknowledged merit shall so write among the Germans, and be approved of by critics of acknowledged merit among them, or at least secure for himself some permanency of favour among the million, we can prove nothing by such instances. That there is so perverse an author, or so blind a critic, in the whole compass of German literature, we have no hesitation in denying.

But farther, among men of deeper views, and with regard to works of really standard character, we find, though not the same, a similar objection repeated. Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, it is said, and *Faust*, are full of bad taste also. With respect to the taste in which they are written we shall have occasion to say somewhat hereafter : meanwhile, we may be permitted to remark that the objection would have more force did it seem to originate from a more mature consideration of the subject. We have heard few English criticisms of such works, in which the first condition of an approach to accuracy was complied with ;— a transposition of the critic into the author's point of vision, a survey of the author's means and objects as they lay before himself, and a just trial of these by rules of universal application. *Faust*, for instance, passes with many of us for a mere tale of sorcery and art-magic : but it would scarcely be more unwise to consider *Hamlet* as depending for its main interest on the ghost that walks in it, than to regard *Faust* as a production of this sort. For the present, therefore, this objection may be set aside ; or at least may be considered not as an assertion, but an inquiry, the answer to which may turn out rather that the German taste is different from ours, than that it is worse. Nay, with regard even to difference, we should scarcely reckon it to be of great moment. Two nations, that agree in estimating Shakespeare as the highest of all poets, can differ in no essential principle, if they understood one another, that relates to poetry.

Nevertheless, this opinion of our opponents has attained a certain degree of consistency with itself ; one thing is thought to throw light on another ; nay, a quiet little theory has been propounded to explain the whole phenomenon. The cause of this bad taste, we are assured, lies in the condition of the German authors. These, it seems, are generally very poor ; the ceremonial law of the country excludes them from all society with the great ; they cannot acquire the polish of

drawing-rooms, but must live in mean houses, and therefore write and think in a mean style.

Apart from the truth of these assumptions, and in respect of the theory itself, we confess there is something in the face of it that afflicts us. Is it then so certain that taste and riches are indissolubly connected? that truth of feeling must ever be preceded by weight of purse, and the eyes be dim for universal and eternal Beauty till they have long rested on gilt walls and costly furniture? To the great body of mankind this were heavy news; for of the thousand, scarcely one is rich, or connected with the rich; nine hundred and ninety-nine have always been poor, and must always be so. We take the liberty of questioning the whole postulate. We think that, for acquiring true poetic taste, riches, or association with the rich, are distinctly among the minor requisites; that in fact they have little or no concern with the matter. This we shall now endeavour to make probable.

Taste, if it mean anything but a paltry connoisseurship, must mean a general susceptibility to truth and nobleness; a sense to discern, and a heart to love and reverence, all beauty, order, goodness, wheresoever or in whatsoever forms and accompaniments they are to be seen. This surely implies, as its chief condition, not any given external rank or situation, but a finely gifted mind, purified into harmony with itself, into keenness and justness of vision; above all, kindled into love and generous admiration. Is culture of this sort found exclusively among the higher ranks? We believe, it proceeds less from without than within, in every rank. The charms of Nature, the majesty of Man, the infinite loveliness of Truth and Virtue, are not hidden from the eye of the poor; but from the eye of the vain, the corrupted, and self-seeking, be he poor or rich. In old ages, the humble Minstrel, a mendicant, and lord of nothing but his harp and his own free soul, had intimations of those glories, while to the proud Baron in his barbaric halls they were unknown. Nor is there still any aristocratic monopoly of judgment more than of genius: and as to that *Science of Negation* which is taught peculiarly by men of professed elegance, we confess we hold it rather cheap. It is a necessary, but decidedly a subordinate, accomplishment; nay, if it be rated as the highest, it becomes a ruinous vice. This is an old truth, yet ever needing new application and enforcement. Let us know what to love, and we shall know also what to reject; what to affirm, and we shall know also what to deny: but it is dangerous to *begin* with denial, — and fatal to end with it. To deny is easy; nothing is sooner learnt or more generally practised: as matters go, we need no man of polish to teach it; but rather, if possible, a hundred men of wisdom to show us its limits, and teach us its reverse.

Such is our hypothesis of the case: But how stands it with the facts? Are the fineness and truth of sense manifested by the artist found, in most instances, to be proportionate to his wealth and elevation of acquaintance? Are they found to have any perceptible relation either with the one or the other? We imagine, not. Whose taste in painting, for instance, is truer and finer than Claude Lorraine's? And was not he a poor colour-grinder; outwardly, the meanest of menials? Where again, we might ask, lay Shakespeare's rent-roll; and what generous peer took him by the hand, and unfolded to him the 'open secret' of the Universe; teaching him that this was beautiful, and that not so? Was he not a peasant by birth, and by fortune something lower; and

was it not thought much, even in the height of his reputation, that Southampton allowed him equal patronage with the zanies, jugglers, and bearwards of the time? Yet compare his taste, even as it respects the negative side of things; for, in regard to the positive, and far higher side, it admits no comparison with any other mortal's,—compare it, for instance, with the taste of Beaumont and Fletcher, his contemporaries, men of rank and education, and of fine genius like himself. Tried even by the nice, fastidious, and in great part false and artificial delicacy of modern times, how stands it with the two parties; with the gay triumphant men of fashion, and the poor vagrant link-boy? Does the latter sin against, we shall not say taste, but etiquette, as the former do? For one line, for one word, which some Chesterfield might wish blotted from the first, are there not in the others whole pages and scenes which, with palpitating heart, he would hurry into deepest night? This too, observe, respects not their genius but their culture; not their appropriation of beauties, but their rejection of deformities, by supposition, the grand and peculiar result of high breeding! Surely, in such instances, even that humble supposition is ill borne out.

The truth of the matter seems to be, that with the culture of a genuine poet, thinker, or other aspirant to fame, the influence of rank has no exclusive or even special concern. For men of action, for senators, public speakers, political writers, the case may be different; but of such we speak not at present. Neither do we speak of imitators, and the crowd of mediocre men, to whom fashionable life sometimes gives an external inoffensiveness, often compensated by a frigid malignity of character. We speak of men who, from amid the perplexed and conflicting elements of their every-day existence, are to form themselves into harmony and wisdom, and show forth the same wisdom to others that exist along with them. To such a man, high life, as it is called, will be a province of human life certainly, but nothing more. He will study to deal with it as he deals with all forms of mortal being; to do it justice, and to draw instruction from it: but his light will come from a loftier region, or he wanders for ever in darkness; dwindles into a man of *vers de société*, or attains at best to be a Walpole or a Caylus. Still less can we think that he is to be viewed as a hireling; that his excellence will be regulated by his pay. 'Sufficiently provided for from within, he has need of little from without:' food and raiment, and an unviolated home, will be given him in the rudest land; and with these, while the kind earth is round him, and the everlasting heaven is over him, the world has little more that it can give. Is he poor? So also were Homer and Socrates; so was Samuel Johnson; so was John Milton. Shall we reproach him with his poverty, and infer, that because he is poor, he must likewise be worthless? God forbid that the time should ever come when he too shall esteem riches the synonyme of good! The spirit of Mammon has a wide empire; but it cannot, and must not, be worshipped in the Holy of Holies. Nay, does not the heart of every genuine disciple of literature, however mean his sphere, instinctively deny this principle, as applicable either to himself or another? Is it not rather true, as D'Alembert has said, that for every man of letters, who deserves that name, the motto and the watchword will be FREEDOM, TRUTH, and even this same POVERTY? and that if he fear the last, the two first can never be made sure to him?

We have stated these things, to bring the question somewhat nearer

its real basis; not for the sake of the Germans, who nowise need the admission of them. The German authors are not poor; neither are they excluded from association with the wealthy and well-born. On the contrary, we scruple not to say, that, in both these respects, they are considerably better situated than our own. Their booksellers, it is true, cannot pay as ours do; yet, there as here, a man lives by his writings; and to compare *Jörden* with *Johnson* and *D'Israeli*, somewhat better there than here. No case like our own noble Otway's has met us in their biographies; Boyces and Chattertons are much rarer in German than in English literary history. But farther, and what is far more important: From the number of universities, libraries, collections of art, museums, and other literary or scientific institutions of a public or private nature, we question whether the chance, which a meritorious man of letters has before him, of obtaining some permanent appointment, some independent civic existence, is not a hundred to one in favour of the German, compared with the Englishman. This is a weighty item, and indeed the weightiest of all; for it will be granted, that for the votary of literature, the relation of entire dependence on the merchants of literature is at best, and however liberal the terms, a highly questionable one. It tempts him daily and hourly to sink from an artist into a manufacturer; nay, so precarious, fluctuating, and every way unsatisfactory must his civic and economic concerns become, that too many of his class cannot even attain the praise of common honesty as manufacturers. There is no doubt a spirit of martyrdom, as we have asserted, which can sustain this too: but few indeed have the spirit of martyrs; and that state of matters is the safest which requires it least. The German authors, moreover, to their credit be it spoken, seem to set less store by wealth than many of ours. There have been prudent, quiet men among them, who actually appeared not to want more wealth — whom wealth could not tempt, either to this hand or to that, from their pre-appointed aims. Neither must we think so hardly of the German nobility as to believe them insensible to genius, or of opinion that a patent from the Lion King is so superior to 'a patent direct from Almighty God.' A fair proportion of the German authors are themselves men of rank: we mention only, as of our own time, and notable in other respects, the two Stollbergs and Novalis. Let us not be unjust to this class of persons. It is a poor error to figure them as wrapt up in ceremonial stateliness, avoiding the most gifted man of a lower station; and for their own supercilious triviality, themselves avoided by all truly gifted men. On the whole, we should change our notion of the German nobleman: that antient, thirsty, thick-headed, sixteen-quartered Baron, who still hovers in our minds, never did exist in such perfection, and is now as extinct, as our own Squire Western. His descendant is a man of other culture, other aims, and other habits. We question whether there is an aristocracy in Europe, which, taken as a whole, both in a public and private capacity, more honours art and literature, and does more both in public and private to encourage them. Excluded from society! What, we would ask, was Wieland's, Schiller's, Herder's, Johannes Müller's society? Has not Goethe, by birth a Frankfort burgher, been since his twenty-sixth year the companion, not of nobles but of princes, and for half his life a minister of State? And is not this man, unrivalled in so many far deeper qualities, known also and felt to be unrivalled in nobleness of breeding and bearing; fit,

not to learn of princes, in this respect, but by the example of his daily life to teach them?

We hear much of the munificent spirit displayed among the better classes in England; their high estimation of the arts, and generous patronage of the artist. We rejoice to hear it; we hope it is true, and will become truer and truer. We hope that a great change has taken place among these classes, since the time when Bishop Burnet could write of them — ‘They are for the most part the *worst* instructed, and ‘the *least* knowing of any of their rank I ever went among!’ Nevertheless, let us arrogate to ourselves no exclusive praise in this particular. Other nations can appreciate the arts, and cherish their cultivators, as well as we. Nay, while learning from us in many other matters, we suspect the Germans might even teach us somewhat in regard to this. At all events, the pity which certain of our authors express for the civil condition of their brethren in that country is, from such a quarter, a superfluous feeling. Nowhere, let us rest assured, is genius more devoutly honoured than there, by all ranks of men, from peasants and burghers up to legislators and kings. It was but last year that the Diet of the Empire passed an Act in favour of one individual poet: the final edition of Goethe’s works was guaranteed to be protected against commercial injury in every state of Germany; and special assurances to that effect were sent him, in the kindest terms, from all the Authorities there assembled, some of them the highest in his country or in Europe. Nay, even while we write, are not the newspapers recording a visit from the Sovereign of Bavaria in person to the same venerable man; a mere ceremony, perhaps, but one which almost recalls to us the era of the antique Sages and the Grecian Kings?

This hypothesis, therefore, it would seem, is not supported by facts, and so returns to its original elements. The causes it alleges are impossible: but what is still more fatal, the effect it proposes to account for has, in reality, no existence. We venture to deny that the Germans are defective in taste; even as a nation, as a public, taking one thing with another, we imagine, they may stand comparison with any of their neighbours; as writers, as critics, they may decidedly court it. True, there is a mass of dullness, awkwardness, and false susceptibility in the lower regions of their literature: but is not bad taste endemical in such regions of every literature under the sun? Pure Stupidity, indeed, is of a quiet nature, and content to be merely stupid. But seldom do we find it pure; seldom unadulterated with some tincture of ambition, which drives it into new and strange metamorphoses. Here it has assumed a contemptuous trenchant air, intended to represent superior tact, and a sort of all wisdom; there a truculent atrabilious scowl, which is to stand for passionate strength: now we have an outpouring of tumid fervour; now a fruitless, asthmatic hunting after wit and humour. Grave or gay, enthusiastic or derisive, admiring or despising, the dull man would be something which he is not and cannot be. Shall we confess that, of these two common extremes, we reckon the German error considerably the more harmless, and, in our day, by far the more curable? Of unwise admiration much may be hoped, for much good is really in it; but unwise contempt is itself a negation; nothing comes of it, for it is nothing.

To judge of a national taste, however, we must raise our view from its transitory modes to its perennial models; from the mass of vulgar

writers, who blaze out and are extinguished with the popular delusion which they flatter, to those few who are admitted to shine with a pure and lasting lustre ; to whom, by common consent, the eyes of the people are turned, as to its loadstars and celestial luminaries. Among German writers of this stamp, we would ask any candid reader of them, let him be of what country or creed he might, whether bad taste struck him as a prevailing characteristic ? Was Wieland's taste uncultivated ? Taste, we should say, and taste of the very species which a disciple of the Negative School would call the highest, formed the great object of his life ; the perfection he unweariedly endeavoured after, and, more than any other perfection, has attained. The most fastidious Frenchman might read him, with admiration of his merely French qualities. And is not Klopstock, with his clear enthusiasm, his azure purity, and heavenly, if still somewhat cold and lunar light, a man of taste ? His *Messias* reminds us oftener of no other poets than of Virgil and Racine. But it is to Lessing that an Englishman would turn with readiest affection. We cannot but wonder that more of this man is not known among us ; or that the knowledge of him has not done more to remove such misconceptions. Among all the writers of the eighteenth century, we will not except even Diderot and David Hume, there is not one of a more compact and rigid intellectual structure ; who more distinctly knows what he is aiming at, or with more gracefulness, vigour, and precision, sets it forth to his readers. He thinks with the clearness and piercing sharpness of the most expert logician ; but a genial fire pervades him, a wit, a heartiness, a general richness and fineness of nature, to which most logicians are strangers. He is a sceptic in many things, but the noblest of sceptics ; a mild, manly, half-careless enthusiasm struggles through his indignant unbelief : he stands before us like a toil-worn, but unwearied and heroic champion, earning not the conquest but the battle ; as indeed himself admits to us, that ‘ it is not ‘ the finding of truth, but the honest search for it that profits.’ We confess, we should be entirely at a loss for the literary creed of that man who reckoned Lessing other than a thoroughly cultivated writer ; nay, entitled to rank, in this particular, with the most distinguished writers of any existing nation. As a poet, as a critic, philosopher, or controversialist, his style will be found precisely such as we of England are accustomed to admire most : brief, nervous, vivid ; yet quiet, without glitter or antithesis ; idiomatic, pure without purism, transparent, yet full of character and reflex hues of meaning. ‘ Every sentence,’ says Horn, and justly, ‘ is like a phalanx ;’ not a word wrong placed, not a word that could be spared ; and it forms itself so calmly and lightly, and stands in its completeness, so gay, yet so impregnable ! As a poet he contemptuously denied himself all merit ; but his readers have not taken him at his word : here too a similar felicity of style attends him ; his plays, his *Minna von Barnhelm*, his *Emilie Galotti*, his *Nathan der Weise*, have a genuine and graceful poetic life ; yet no works known to us in any language are purer from exaggeration, or any appearance of falsehood. They are pictures, we might say, painted not in colours, but in crayons ; yet a strange attraction lies in them ; for the figures are grouped into the finest attitudes, and true and spirit-speaking in every line. It is with his style chiefly that we have to do here ; yet we must add, that the matter of his works is not less meritorious. His Criticism and philosophic or religious Scepticism were of a higher mood than had yet been heard in Europe, still more in Ger-

many : his *Dramaturgie* first exploded the pretensions of the French theatre, and, with irresistible conviction, made Shakespeare known to his countrymen ; preparing the way for a brighter era in their literature, the chief men of which still thankfully look back to Lessing as their patriarch. His *Laocoon*, with its deep glances into the philosophy of Art, his *Dialogues of Free-masons*, a work of far higher import than its title indicates, may yet teach many things to most of us, which we know not, and ought to know.

With Lessing and Klopstock might be joined in this respect nearly every one, we do not say of their distinguished, but even of their tolerated contemporaries. The two Jacobis, known more or less in all countries, are little known here if they are accused of wanting literary taste. These are men, whether as thinkers or poets, to be regarded and admired for their mild and lofty wisdom, the devoutness, the benignity and calm grandeur of their philosophical views. In such, it were strange if among so many high merits, this lower one of a just and elegant style, which is indeed their natural and even necessary product, had been wanting. We recommend the elder Jacobi no less for his clearness than for his depth ; of the younger, it may be enough in this point of view to say, that the chief praisers of his earlier poetry were the French. Neither are Hamann and Mendelsohn, who could meditate deep thoughts, defective in the power of uttering them with propriety. The *Phædon* of the latter, in its chaste precision and simplicity of style, may almost remind us of Xenophon : Socrates, to our mind, has spoken in no modern language so like Socrates, as here, by the lips of this wise and cultivated Jew.*

Among the poets and more popular writers of the time, the case is the same : Utz, Gellert, Cramer, Ramler, Kleist, Hagedorn, Rabener, Gleim, and a multitude of lesser men, whatever excellencies they might want, certainly are not chargeable with bad taste. Nay, perhaps of all writers, they are the least chargeable with it : a certain clear, light, unaffected elegance, of a higher nature than French elegance, it might be, yet to the exclusion of all very deep or genial qualities, was the excellence they strove after, and for the most part in a fair measure attained. They resemble English writers of the same, or perhaps an earlier period, more than any other foreigners : apart from Pope, whose influence is visible enough, Beattie, Logan, Wilkie, Glover, unknown perhaps to any of them, might otherwise have almost seemed

* The history of Mendelsohn is interesting in itself, and full of encouragement to all lovers of self-improvement. At thirteen he was a wandering Jewish beggar, without health, without home, almost without a language, for the jargon of broken Hebrew and provincial German which he spoke could scarcely be called one. At middle age, he could write this *Phædon* ; was a man of wealth and breeding, and ranked among the teachers of his age. Like Pope, he abode by his original creed, though often solicited to change it : indeed, the grand problem of his life was to better the inward and outward condition of his own ill-fated people ; for whom he actually accomplished much benefit. He was a mild, shrewd, and worthy man ; and might well love *Phædon* and Socrates, for his own character was Socratic. He was a friend of Lessing's : indeed, a pupil ; for Lessing having accidentally met him at chess, recognised the spirit that lay struggling under such incumbrances, and generously undertook to help him. By teaching the poor Jew a little Greek, he disenchanted him from the Talmud and the Rabbins. The two were afterwards co-labourers in Nicolai's *Deutsche Bibliothek*, the first German *Review* of any character ; which, however, in the hands of Nicolai himself, it subsequently lost. Mendelsohn's Works have mostly been translated into French.

their models. Goldsmith also would rank among them ; perhaps in regard to true poetic genius, at their head, for none of them has left us a *Vicar of Wakefield* ; though, in regard to judgment, knowledge, general talent, his place would scarcely be so high.

The same thing holds, in general, and with fewer drawbacks, of the somewhat later and more energetic race, denominated the *Göttingen School*, in contradistinction from the *Saxon*, to which Rabener, Cramer, and Gellert, directly belonged, and most of those others indirectly. Höltz, Bürger, the two Stollbergs, are men whom Bossu might measure with his scale and compasses as strictly as he pleased. Of Herder, Schiller, Goethe, we speak not here ; they are men of another stature and form of movement, whom Bossu's scale and compasses could not measure without difficulty, or rather not at all. To say that such men wrote with taste of this sort, were saying little ; for this forms not the apex, but the basis, in their conception of style ; a quality not to be paraded as an excellence, but to be understood as indispensable, as there by necessity, and like a thing of course.

In truth, for it must be spoken out, our opponents are so widely astray in this matter, that their views of it are not only dim and perplexed, but altogether imaginary and delusive. It is proposed to school the Germans in the Alphabet of taste ; and the Germans are already busied with their *Accidence* ! Far from being behind other nations in the practice or science of Criticism, it is a fact, for which we fearlessly refer to all competent judges, that they are distinctly, and even considerably, in advance. We state what is already known to a great part of Europe to be true. Criticism has assumed a new form in Germany ; it proceeds on other principles, and proposes to itself a higher aim. The grand question is not now a question concerning the qualities of diction, the coherence of metaphors, the fitness of sentiments, the general logical truth, in a work of art, as it was some half century ago among most critics : neither is it a question mainly of a psychological sort, to be answered by discovering and delineating the peculiar nature of the poet from his poetry, as is usual with the best of our own critics at present ; but it is not, indeed exclusively, but inclusively of those two other questions, properly and ultimately a question on the essence and peculiar life of the poetry itself. The first of these questions, as we see it answered, for instance, in the criticisms of Johnson and Kames, relates, strictly speaking, to the *garment* of poetry ; the second, indeed, to its *body* and material existence, a much higher point ; but only the last to its *soul* and spiritual existence, by which alone can the body, in its movements and phases, be *informed* with significance and rational life. The problem is not now to determine by what mechanism Addison composed sentences, and struck out similitudes, but by what far finer and more mysterious mechanism Shakespeare organized his dramas, and gave life and individuality to his Ariel and his Hamlet. Wherein lies that life ; how have they attained that shape and individuality ? Whence comes that empyrean fire, which irradiates their whole being, and pierces, at least in starry gleams, like a diviner thing, into all hearts ? Are these dramas of his, not verisimilar only, but true ; nay, truer than reality itself, since the essence of unmixed reality is bodied forth in them under more expressive symbols ? What is this unity of theirs ; and can our deeper inspection discern it to be indivisible, and existing by necessity, because each work springs, as it were, from the general elements of all Thought, and grows up therefrom, into

form and expansion, by its own growth? Not only who was the poet, and how did he compose; but what and how was the poem, and why was it a poem and not rhymed eloquence, creation and not figured passion? These are the questions for the critic. Criticism stands like an interpreter between the inspired and the uninspired; between the prophet and those who hear the melody of his words, and catch some glimpse of their material meaning, but understand not their deeper import. She pretends to open for us this deeper import; to clear our sense that it may discern the pure brightness of this eternal Beauty, and recognise it as heavenly, under all forms where it looks forth, and reject, as of the earth earthy, all forms, be their material splendour what it may, where no gleaming of that other shines through.

This is the task of Criticism, as the Germans understand it. And how do they accomplish this task? By a vague declamation clothed in gorgeous mystic phraseology? By vehement tumultuous anthems to the poet and his poetry; by epithets and laudatory similitudes drawn from Tartarus and Elysium, and all intermediate terrors and glories; whereby, in truth, it is rendered clear both that the poet is an extremely great poet, and also that the critic's allotment of understanding, overflowed by these Pythian raptures, has unhappily melted into deliquium? Nowise in this manner do the Germans proceed; but by rigorous scientific inquiry; by appeal to principles which, whether correct or not, have been deduced patiently and by long investigation from the highest and calmest regions of Philosophy. For this finer portion of their Criticism is now also embodied in systems; and standing, so far as these reach, coherent, distinct, and methodical, no less than, on their much shallower foundation, the systems of Boileau and Blair. That this new Criticism is a complete, much more a certain science, we are far from meaning to affirm; the *aesthetic* theories of Kant, Herder, Schiller, Goethe, Richter, vary in external aspect, according to the varied habits of the individual; and can at best only be regarded as approximations to the truth, or modifications of it; each critic representing it, as it harmonizes more or less perfectly with the other intellectual persuasions of his own mind, and of different classes of minds that resemble his. Nor can we here undertake to inquire what degree of such approximation to the truth there is in each or all of these writers; or in Tieck and the two Schlegels, who, especially the latter, have laboured so meritoriously in reconciling these various opinions; and so successfully in impressing and diffusing the best spirit of them, first in their own country, and now also in several others. Thus much however, we will say: That we reckon the mere circumstance of such a science being in existence, a ground of the highest consideration, and worthy the best attention of all inquiring men. For we should err widely if we thought that this new tendency of critical science pertains to Germany alone. It is a European tendency, and springs from the general condition of intellect in Europe. We ourselves have all, for the last thirty years, more or less distinctly felt the necessity of such a science; witness the neglect into which our Blairs and Bossus have silently fallen; our increased and increasing admiration, not only of Shakespeare, but of all his contemporaries, and of all who breathe any portion of his spirit; our controversy whether Pope was a poet; and so much vague effort on the part of our best critics, everywhere, to express some still unexpressed idea concerning the nature of true poetry; as if they felt in their hearts that a purer glory, nay, a divineness,

belonged to it, for which they had as yet no name, and no intellectual form. But in Italy too, in France itself, the same thing is visible. Their grand controversy, so hotly urged between the *Classicists* and the *Romanticists*, in which the Schlegels are assumed, much too loosely, on all hands, as the patrons and generalissimoes of the latter, shows us sufficiently what spirit is at work in that long stagnant literature. Doubtless this turbid fermentation of the elements will at length settle into clearness, both there and here, as in Germany it has already in a great measure done; and perhaps a more serene and genial poetic day is everywhere to be expected with some confidence. How much the example of the Germans may have to teach us in this particular needs no farther exposition.

The authors and first promulgators of this new critical doctrine were at one time contemptuously named the *New School*; nor was it till after a war of all the few good heads in the nation, with all the many bad ones, had ended as such wars must ever do*, that these critical principles were generally adopted; and their assertors found to be no *School*, or new heretical Sect, but the antient primitive Catholic Communion, of which all sects that had any living light in them were but members and subordinate modes. It is, indeed, the most sacred article of this creed to preach and practise universal tolerance. Every literature of the world has been cultivated by the Germans; and to every literature they have studied to give due honour. Shakespeare and Homer, no doubt occupy alone the loftiest station in the poetical Olympus; but there is space in it for all true Singers, out of every age and clime. Ferdusi and the primeval Mythologists of Hindostan live in brotherly union with the Troubadours and antient Story-tellers of the West. The wayward mystic gloom of Calderon, the lurid fire of Dante, the auroral light of Tasso, the clear icy glitter of Racine,—all are acknowledged and revered; nay, in the celestial fore-court an abode has been appointed for the Gressets and Delilles, that no spark of inspiration, no tone of mental music, might remain unrecognised. The Germans study foreign nations in a spirit which deserves to be oftener imitated. It is their honest endeavour to understand each, with its own peculiarities, in its own special manner of existing; not that they may praise it, or censure it, or attempt to alter it, but simply that they may know it; that they may see this manner of existing as the nation itself sees it, and so participate in whatever worth or beauty it has brought into being. Of all literatures, accordingly, the German has the best as well as the most translations; men like Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, Schlegel, Tieck, have not disdained this task. Of Shakespeare there are three entire versions admitted to be good; and we know not how many partial, or considered as bad. In their criticisms of him we ourselves have long ago admitted, that no such clear judgment or

* It began in Schiller's *Musen Almanach* for 1793. The *Xenien* (a series of philosophic epigrams jointly by Schiller and Goethe) descended there unexpectedly, like a flood of ethereal fire, on the German literary world; quickening all that was noble into new life, but visiting the antient empire of Dulness with astonishment and unknown pangs. The agitation was extreme; scarcely since the age of Luther has there been such stir and strife in the intellect of Germany; indeed, scarcely since that age, has there been a controversy, if we consider its ultimate bearings on the best and noblest interests of mankind, so important as this, which, for the time, seemed only to turn on metaphysical subtleties and matters of mere elegance. Its farther applications became apparent by degrees.

heartly appreciation of his merits had ever been exhibited by any critic of our own.

To attempt stating in separate aphorisms the doctrines of this new poetical system would, in such space as is now allowed us, be to insure them of misapprehension. The science of Criticism, as the Germans practise it, is no study of an hour; for it springs from the depths of thought, and remotely or immediately connects itself with the subtlest problems of all philosophy. One characteristic of it we may state, the obvious parent of many others. Poetic beauty, in its pure essence, is not, by this theory, as by all our theories, from Hume's to Alison's, derived from anything external, or of merely intellectual origin; not from association, or any reflex or reminiscence of mere sensations; nor from natural love, either of imitation, of similarity in dissimilarity, of excitement by contrast, or of seeing difficulties overcome. On the contrary, it is assumed as underived; not borrowing its existence from such sources, but as lending to most of these their significance and principal charm for the mind. It dwells and is born in the inmost Spirit of Man, united to all love of Virtue, to all true belief in God; or rather, it is one with this love and this belief, another phase of the same highest principle in the mysterious infinitude of the human Soul. To apprehend this beauty of poetry, in its full and purest brightness, is not easy, but difficult; thousands on thousands eagerly read poems, and attain not the smallest taste of it; yet to all uncorrupted hearts, some effulgences of this heavenly glory are here and there revealed; and to apprehend it clearly and wholly, to acquire and maintain a sense and heart that sees and worships it, is the last perfection of all humane culture. With mere readers for amusement, therefore, this Criticism has and can have nothing to do; these find their amusement — in less or greater measure, and the nature of Poetry remains for ever hidden from them in the deepest concealment. On all hands, there is no truce given to the hypothesis, that the ultimate object of the poet is to please. Sensation, even of the finest and most rapturous sort, is not the end but the means. Art is to be loved, not because of its effects, but because of itself; not because it is useful for spiritual pleasure, or even for moral culture, but because it is Art, and the highest in man, and the soul of all Beauty. To inquire after its *utility* would be like inquiring after the *utility* of a God, or what to the Germans would sound stranger than it does to us, the *utility* of Virtue and Religion. On these particulars, the authenticity of which we might verify, not so much by citation of individual passages, as by reference to the scope and spirit of whole treatises, we must for the present leave our readers to their own reflections. Might we advise them, it would be to inquire farther, and, if possible, to see the matter with their own eyes.

Meanwhile, that all this must tend, among the Germans, to raise the general standard of Art, and of what an artist ought to be in his own esteem and that of others, will be readily inferred. The character of a Poet does, accordingly, stand higher with the Germans than with most nations. That he is a man of integrity as a man, of zeal and honest diligence in his art, and of true manly feeling towards all men, is of course presupposed. Of persons that are not so, but employ their gift, in rhyme or otherwise, for brutish or malignant purposes, it is understood that such lie without the limits of Criticism, being subjects not for the judge of Art, but for the judge of Police. But even with

regard to the fair tradesman, who offers his talent in open market, to do work of a harmless and acceptable sort for hire,—with regard to this person also, their opinion is very low. The ‘Bread-artist,’ as they call him, can gain no reverence for himself from these men. ‘Unhappy mortal!’ says the mild but lofty-minded Schiller, ‘Unhappy mortal! that, with Science and Art, the noblest of all Instruments, effectest and attemptest nothing more than the day-drudge with the meanest; that in the domain of perfect Freedom, bearest about in thee the spirit of a Slave!’ Nay, to the genuine Poet, they deny even the privilege of regarding what so many cherish, under the title of their ‘fame,’ as the best and highest of all. Hear Schiller again:

‘The Artist, it is true, is the son of his age; but pity for him if he is its pupil, or even its favourite! Let some beneficent divinity snatch him, when a suckling, from the breast of his mother, and nurse him with the milk of a better time, that he may ripen to his full stature beneath a distant Grecian sky. And having grown to manhood, let him return, a foreign shape, into his century; not, however, to delight it by his presence, but dreadful, like the son of Agamemnon, to purify it. The matter of his works he will take from the present, but their form he will derive from a nobler time; nay, from beyond all time, from the absolute unchanging unity of his own nature. Here, from the pure æther of his spiritual essence, flows down the Fountain of Beauty, uncontaminated by the pollutions of ages and generations, which roll to and fro in their turbid vortex far beneath it. His matter Caprice can dishonour, as she has ennobled it; but the chaste form is withdrawn from her mutations. The Roman of the first century had long bent the knee before his Cæsars, when the statues of Rome were still standing erect; the temples continued holy to the eye, when their gods had long been a laughing-stock; and the abominations of a Nero and a Commodus were silently rebuked by the style of the edifice, which lent them its concealment. Man has lost his dignity, but Art has saved it, and preserved it for him in expressive marbles. Truth still lives in fiction, and from the copy the original will be restored.

‘But how is the Artist to guard himself from the corruptions of his time, which on every side assail him? By despising its decisions. Let him look upwards to his dignity and the law, not downwards to his happiness and his wants. Free alike from the vain activity that longs to impress its traces on the fleeting instant, and from the querulous spirit of enthusiasm that measures by the scale of perfection the meagre product of reality, let him leave to mere Understanding, which is here at home, the province of the actual; while *he* strives, by uniting the possible with the necessary, to produce the ideal. This let him imprint and express in fiction and truth; imprint it in the sport of his imagination and the earnest of his actions; imprint it in all sensible and spiritual forms, and cast it silently into everlasting time.’ *

Still higher are Fichte’s notions on this subject; or rather expressed in higher terms, for the central principle is the same both in the philosopher and the poet. According to Fichte, there is a ‘Divine Idea’

* *Ueber die Ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (On the Æsthetic Education of Man).

pervading the visible Universe ; which visible Universe is indeed but its symbol and sensible manifestation, having in itself no meaning, or even true existence independent of it. To the mass of men this Divine Idea of the world lies hidden : yet to discern it, to seize it, and live wholly in it, is the condition of all genuine virtue, knowledge, freedom ; and the end therefore of all spiritual effort in every age. Literary Men are the appointed interpreters of this Divine Idea ; a perpetual priesthood, we might say, standing forth generation after generation, as the dispensers and living types of God's everlasting wisdom, to show it and embody it in their writings and actions, in such particular form as their own particular times require it in. For each age, by the law of its nature, is different from every other age, and demands a different representation of this Divine Idea, the essence of which is the same in all ; so that the literary man of one century is only by mediation and re-interpretation applicable to the wants of another. But in every century, every man who labours, be it in what province he may, to teach others, must first have possessed himself of this Divine Idea, or, at least, be with his whole heart and his whole soul striving after it. If, without possessing it or striving after it, he abide diligently by some material practical department of knowledge, he may indeed still be (says Fichte, in his usual rugged way) a ' useful hod-man ;' but should he attempt to deal with the Whole, and to become an architect, he is in strictness of language, ' Nothing ;'—' he is an ambiguous mongrel ' between the possessor of the Idea, and the man who feels himself ' solidly supported and carried on by the common Reality of things ; ' in his fruitless endeavour after the Idea, he has neglected to acquire ' the craft of taking part in this Reality ; and so hovers between two ' worlds, without pertaining to either.' Elsewhere he adds :

' There is still, from another point of view, another division in our ' notion of the Literary Man, and one to us of immediate application. ' Namely, either the Literary Man has already laid hold of the whole ' Divine Idea, in so far as it can be comprehended by man, or perhaps ' of a special portion of this its comprehensible part,—which truly is ' not possible without at least a clear oversight of the whole,—he has ' already laid hold of it, penetrated, and made it entirely clear to him- ' self, so that it has become a possession recallable at all times in the ' same shape to his view, and a component part of his personality : in ' that case he is a completed and equipt Literary Man, a man who *has* ' studied. Or else, he is still struggling and striving to make the Idea ' in general, or that particular portion and point of it from which ' onwards he for his part means to penetrate the whole, entirely clear ' to himself ; detached sparkles of light already spring forth on him ' from all sides, and disclose a higher world before him ; but they do ' not yet unite themselves into an indivisible whole ; they vanish from ' his view as capriciously as they came ; he cannot yet bring them ' under obedience to his freedom : in that case he is a progressing ' and self unfolding literary man, a Student. That it be actually ' the Idea, which is possessed or striven after, is common to both. ' Should the striving aim merely at the outward form, and the letter ' of learned culture, there is then produced, when the circle is gone ' round, the completed, when it is not gone round, the progress- ' ing, Bungler (*Stümper*). The latter is more tolerable than the ' former ; for there is still room to hope that in continuing his travel,

‘ he may at some future point be seized by the Idea ; but of the first
 ‘ all hope is over.’*

From this bold and lofty principle the duties of the Literary Man are deduced with scientific precision ; and stated, in all their sacredness and grandeur, with an austere brevity more impressive than any rhetoric. Fichte’s metaphysical theory may be called in question, and readily enough misapprehended ; but the sublime stoicism of his sentiments will find some response in many a heart. We must add the conclusion of his first Discourse, as a farther illustration of his manner :

‘ In disquisitions of the sort like ours of to-day, which all the rest,
 ‘ too, must resemble, the generality are wont to censure : First, their
 ‘ severity ; very often on the good-natured supposition that the speaker
 ‘ is not aware how much his rigour must displease us ; that we have but
 ‘ frankly to let him know this, and then doubtless he will reconsider
 ‘ himself, and soften his statements. Thus, we said above, that a man
 ‘ who after literary culture had not arrived at knowledge of the Divine
 ‘ Idea, or did not strive towards it, was in strict speech Nothing ;
 ‘ and farther down, we said that he was a Bungler. This is in the
 ‘ style of those unmerciful expressions by which philosophers give
 ‘ such offence. Now looking away from the present case, that we may
 ‘ front the maxim in its general shape, I remind you that this species
 ‘ of character, without decisive force to renounce all respect for Truth,
 ‘ seeks merely to bargain and cheapen something out of her, whereby
 ‘ itself on easier terms may attain to some consideration. But Truth,
 ‘ which once for all is as she is, and cannot alter aught of her nature,
 ‘ goes on her way ; and there remains for her, in regard to those who
 ‘ desire her not simply because she is true, nothing else but to leave
 ‘ them standing as if they had never addressed her.

‘ Then farther, discourses of this sort are wont to be censured as
 ‘ unintelligible. Thus I figure to myself,—nowise you, Gentlemen,
 ‘ but some completed Literary Man of the second species, whose eye
 ‘ the disquisition here entered upon chanced to meet, as coming forward,
 ‘ doubting this way and that, and at last reflectively exclaiming :
 ‘ “ The Idea, the Divine Idea, that which lies at the bottom of Appearance :
 ‘ what pray may *this* mean ? ” Of such a questioner I would
 ‘ inquire in turn : “ What pray may this question mean ? ”—Investigate
 ‘ it strictly, it means in most cases nothing more than this, “ Under
 ‘ what other names, and in what other formulas do I already know
 ‘ this same thing, which thou expressest by so strange and to me so
 ‘ unknown a symbol ? ” And to this again in most cases the only
 ‘ suitable reply were, “ Thou knowest this thing not at all, neither
 ‘ under this, nor under any other name ; and wouldst thou arrive at
 ‘ the knowledge of it, thou must even now begin at the beginning to
 ‘ make study thereof ;—and then, most fitly, under that name by
 ‘ which it is first presented to thee ! ”’

With such a notion of the Artist, it were a strange inconsistency did Criticism show itself unscientific or lax in estimating the products of his Art. For light on this point, we might refer to the writings of almost any individual among the German critics : take, for instance, the

* *Ueber das Wesen des Gelehrten* (On the Nature of the Literary Man) ; a Course of Lectures delivered at Jena, in 1805.

Charakteristiken of the two Schlegels, a work too of their younger years; and say whether in depth, clearness, minute and patient fidelity, these *Characters* have often been surpassed, or the import and poetic worth of so many poets and poems more vividly and accurately brought to view. As an instance of a much higher kind, we might refer to Goethe's criticism of *Hamlet* in his *Wilhelm Meister*. This truly is what may be called the poetry of criticism; for it is in some sort also a creative art; aiming, at least, to re-produce under a different shape the existing product of the poet; painting to the intellect what already lay painted to the heart and the imagination. Nor is it over poetry alone that criticism watches with such loving strictness; the mimic, the pictorial, the musical arts, all modes of representing or addressing the highest nature of man, are acknowledged as younger sisters of Poetry, and fostered with like care. Winkelmann's *History of Plastic Art* is known by repute to all readers: and of those who know it by inspection, many may have wondered why such a work has not been added to our own literature, to instruct our own statuaries and painters. On this subject of the plastic arts, we cannot withhold the following little sketch of Goethe's, as a specimen of pictorial criticism in what we consider a superior style. It is of an imaginary landscape-painter, and his views of Swiss scenery; it will bear to be studied minutely, for there is no word without its meaning:

‘ He succeeds in representing the cheerful repose of lake prospects, where houses in friendly approximation, imaging themselves in the clear wave, seem as if bathing in its depths; shores encircled with green hills, behind which rise forest mountains, and icy peaks of glaciers. The tone of colouring in such scenes is gay, mirthfully clear; the distances as if overflowed with softening vapour, which from watered hollows and river valleys mounts up grayer and mistier, and indicates their windings. No less is the master's art to be praised in views from valleys lying nearer the high Alpine ranges, where declivities slope down, luxuriantly overgrown, and fresh streams roll hastily along by the foot of rocks.

‘ With exquisite skill, in the deep shady trees of the foreground, he gives the distinctive character of the several species; satisfying us in the form of the whole, as in the structure of the branches, and the details of the leaves; no less so, in the fresh green with its manifold shadings, where soft airs appear as if fanning us with benignant breath, and the lights as if thereby put in motion.

‘ In the middle ground, his lively green tone grows fainter by degrees; and at last, on the more distant mountain-tops, passing into weak violet, weds itself with the blue of the sky. But our artist is above all happy in his paintings of high Alpine regions; in seizing the simple greatness and stillness of their character; the wide pastures on the slopes, where dark solitary firs stand forth from the grassy carpet; and from high cliffs, foaming brooks rush down. Whether he relieve his pasturages with grazing cattle, or the narrow winding rocky path with mules and laden pack-horses, he paints all with equal truth and richness; still, introduced in the proper place, and not in too great copiousness, they decorate and enliven these scenes, without interrupting, without lessening, their peaceful solitude. The execution testifies a master's hand; easy, with a few sure strokes, and yet complete. In his later pieces, he employed glittering English permanent-colours on paper: these pictures, ac-

‘ cordingly, are of pre-eminently blooming tone ; cheerful, yet at the same time strong and sated.

‘ His views of deep mountain-chasms, where round and round nothing fronts us but dead rock, where, in the abyss, overspanned by its bold arch, the wild stream rages, are, indeed, of less attraction than the former : yet their truth excites us ; we admire the great effect of the whole, produced at so little cost, by a few expressive strokes, and masses of local colours.

‘ With no less accuracy of character can he represent the regions of the topmost Alpine ranges, where neither tree nor shrub any more appears ; but only amid the rocky teeth and snow summits, a few sunny spots clothe themselves with a soft sward. Beautiful, and balmy and inviting as he colours these spots, he has here wisely borne to introduce grazing herds ; for these regions give food only to the chamois, and a perilous employment to the wild hay-men.’ *

We have extracted this passage from *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre*, Goethe’s last Novel. The perusal of his whole Works would show, among many other more important facts, that Criticism also is a science of which he is master ; that if ever any man had studied Art in all its branches and bearings, from its origin in the depths of the creative spirit, to its minutest finish on the canvass of the painter, on the lips of the poet, or under the finger of the musician, he was that man. A nation which appreciates such studies, nay, requires and rewards them, cannot, wherever its defects may lie, be defective in judgment of the arts.

But a weightier question still remains. What has been the fruit of this its high and just judgment on these matters ? What has Criticism profited it, to the bringing forth of good works ? How do its poems and its poets correspond with so lofty a standard ? We answer, that on this point also, Germany may rather court investigation than fear it. There are poets in that country who belong to a nobler class than most nations have to show in these days ; a class entirely unknown to some nations ; and for the last two centuries, rare in all. We have no hesitation in stating, that we see in certain of the best German poets, and those too of our own time, something which associates them, remotely or nearly we say not, but which does associate them with the Masters of Art, the Saints of Poetry, long since departed, and, as we thought, without successors, from the earth ; but canonized in the hearts of all generations, and yet living to all by the memory of what they did and were. Glances we do seem to find of that ethereal glory, which looks on us in its full brightness from the *Transfiguration* of Rafaele, from the *Tempest* of Shakespeare ; and in broken, but purest and still heart-piercing beams, struggling through the gloom of long ages, from the tragedies of Sophocles and the weather-worn sculptures of the Parthenon. This is that heavenly spirit, which, best seen in the aerial embodiment of poetry, but spreading likewise over all the thoughts and actions of an age, has given us Surreys, Sydneys, Raleighs in court and camp, Cecils in policy, Hookers in divinity, Bacons in philosophy, and Shakespeares and Spensers in song. All hearts that know this, know it

* The poor wild-hay-man of the Rigiberg,
Whose trade is, on the brow of the abyss,
To mow the common grass from nooks and shelves,
To which the cattle dare not climb.—*Schiller’s Wilhelm Tell.*

to be the highest ; and that, in poetry or elsewhere, it alone is true and imperishable. In affirming that any vestige, however feeble, of this divine spirit, is discernible in German poetry, we are aware that we place it above the existing poetry of any other nation.

To prove this bold assertion, logical arguments were at all times unavailing ; and, in the present circumstances of the case, more than usually so. Neither will any extract or specimen help us ; for it is not in parts, but in whole poems, that the spirit of a true poet is to be seen. We can, therefore, only name such men as Tieck, Richter, Herder, Schiller, and, above all, Goethe ; and ask any reader, who has learned to admire wisely our own literature of Queen Elizabeth's age, to peruse these writers also ; to study them till he feels that he has understood them, and justly estimated both their light and darkness ; and then to pronounce whether it is not, in some degree, as we have said ? Are there not tones here of that old melody ? Are there not glimpses of that serene soul, that calm harmonious strength, that smiling earnestness, that Love and Faith and Humanity of nature ? Do these foreign contemporaries of ours still exhibit in their characters as men something of that sterling nobleness, that union of majesty with meekness, which we must ever venerate in those our spiritual fathers ? And do their works, in the new form of this century, show forth that old nobleness, not consistent only with the science, the precision, the scepticism of these days, but wedded to them, incorporated with them, and shining through them like their life and soul ? Might it in truth almost seem to us, in reading the prose of Goethe, as if we were reading that of Milton ; and of Milton writing with the culture of this time ; combining French clearness with old English depth ? And of his poetry may it indeed be said that it *is* poetry, and yet the poetry of our own generation ; an ideal world, and yet the world we even now live in ?—These questions we must leave candid and studious inquirers to answer for themselves ; premising only, that the secret is not to be found on the surface ; that the first reply is likely to be in the negative, but with inquirers of this sort, by no means likely to be the final one.

To ourselves, we confess, it has long so appeared. The poetry of Goethe, for instance, we reckon to be Poetry, sometimes in the very highest sense of that word ; yet it is no reminiscence, but something actually present and before us ; no looking back into an antique Fairyland, divided by impassable abysses from the real world as it lies about us and within us ; but a looking round upon that real world itself, now rendered holier to our eyes, and once more become a solemn temple, where the spirit of Beauty still dwells, and, under new emblems, to be worshipped as of old. With Goethe, the mythologies of bygone days pass only for what they are : we have no witchcraft or magic in the common acceptation ; and spirits no longer bring with them airs from heaven or blasts from hell ; for Pandemonium and the steadfast Empyrean have faded away, since the opinions which they symbolized no longer are. Neither does he bring his heroes from remote Oriental climates, or periods of Chivalry, or any section either of Atlantis or the Age of Gold ; feeling that the reflex of these things is cold and faint, and only hangs like a cloud-picture in the distance, beautiful but delusive, and which even the simplest know to be delusion. The end of Poetry is higher : she must dwell in Reality, and become manifest to men in the forms among which they live and move. And this is what we prize in Goethe, and more or less in Schiller and the rest ; all of

whom, each in his own way, are writers of a similar aim. The coldest sceptic, the most callous worldling, sees not the actual aspects of life more sharply than they are here delineated: the nineteenth century stands before us, in all its contradiction and perplexity; barren, mean, and baleful, as we have all known it; yet here no longer mean or barren, but enamelled into beauty in the poet's spirit; for its secret significance is laid open, and thus, as it were, the life-giving fire that slumbers in it is called forth, and flowers and foliage, as of old, are springing on its bleakest wildernesses, and overmantling its sternest cliffs. For these men have not only the clear eye, but the loving heart. They have penetrated into the mystery of Nature; after long trial they have been initiated; and to unwearied endeavour, Art has at last yielded her secret; and thus can the Spirit of our Age, embodied in fair imaginations, look forth on us, earnest and full of meaning, from their works. As the first and indispensable condition of good poets, they are wise and good men: much they have seen and suffered, and they have conquered all this, and made it all their own; they have known life in its heights and depths, and mastered it in both, and can teach others what it is, and how to lead it rightly. Their minds are as a mirror to us, where the perplexed image of our own being is reflected back in soft and clear interpretation. Here mirth and gravity are blended together; wit rests on deep devout wisdom, as the greensward with its flowers must rest on the rock, whose foundations reach downward to the centre. In a word, they are Believers; but their faith is no sallow plant of darkness: it is green and flowery, for it grows in the sunlight. And this faith is the doctrine they have to teach us, the sense which, under every noble and graceful form, it is their endeavour to set forth:

As all Nature's thousand changes
But one changeless God proclaim,
So in Art's wide kingdoms ranges
One sole meaning, still the same:
This is Truth, eternal Reason,
Which from Beauty takes its dress,
And, serene through time and season,
Stands for aye in loveliness.

Such indeed is the end of Poetry at all times; yet in no recent literature known to us, except the German, has it been so far attained; nay, perhaps so much as consciously and steadfastly attempted.

The reader feels that if this our opinion be in any measure true, it is a truth of no ordinary moment. It concerns not this writer or that; but it opens to us new views on the fortune of spiritual culture with ourselves and all nations. Have we not heard gifted men complaining that Poetry had passed away without return; that creative imagination consorted not with vigour of intellect, and that in the cold light of science there was no longer room for faith in things unseen? The old simplicity of heart was gone; earnest emotions must no longer be expressed in earnest symbols; beauty must recede into elegance, devoutness of character be replaced by clearness of thought, and grave wisdom by shrewdness and *persiflage*. Such things we have heard, but hesitated to believe them. If the poetry of the Germans, and this not by theory but by example, have proved, or even begun to prove, the contrary, it will deserve far higher encomiums than any we have passed upon it.

In fact, the past and present aspect of German literature illustrates the literature of England in more than one way. Its history keeps pace with that of ours; for so closely are all European communities connected, that the phases of mind in any one country, so far as these represent its general circumstances and intellectual position, are but modified repetitions of its phases in every other. We hinted above, that the Saxon School corresponded with what might be called the Scotch: Cramer was not unlike our Blair; Von Cronegk might be compared with Michael Bruce; and Rabener and Gellert with Beattie and Logan. To this mild and cultivated period, there succeeded, as with us, a partial abandonment of poetry, in favour of political and philosophical Illumination. Then was the time when hot war was declared against Prejudice of all sorts; Utility was set up for the universal measure of mental as well as material value; poetry, except of an economical and preceptorial character, was found to be the product of a rude age; and religious enthusiasm was but derangement in the biliary organs. Then did the Prices and Condorcets of Germany indulge in day-dreams of perfectibility; a new social order was to bring back the Saturnian era to the world; and philosophers sat on their sunny Pisgah, looking back over dark savage deserts, and forward into a land flowing with milk and honey.

This period also passed away, with its good and its evil; of which chiefly the latter seems to be remembered; for we scarcely ever find the affair alluded to, except in terms of contempt, by the title *Aufklärerey* (Illuminationism); and its partisans, in subsequent satirical controversies, received the nickname of *Philistern* (Philistines), which the few scattered remnants of them still bear, both in writing and speech. Poetry arose again, and in a new and singular shape. The *Sorrows of Werter*, *Götz von Berlichingen*, and *The Robbers* may stand as patriarchs and representatives of three separate classes, which, commingled in various proportions, or separately co-existing, now with the preponderance of this, now of that, occupied the whole popular literature of Germany till near the end of last century. These were the Sentimentalists, the Chivalry-play-writers, and other gorgeous and outrageous persons; as a whole, now pleasantly denominated the *Kraftmänner*, literally, Power-men. They dealt in sceptical lamentation, mysterious enthusiasm, frenzy and suicide: they recurred with fondness to the Feudal Ages, delineating many a battlemented keep, and swart buff-belted man-at-arms; for in reflection as in action, they studied to be strong, vehement, rapidly effective; of battle-tumult, love-madness, heroism, and despair, there was no end. This literary period is called the *Sturm-und-Drang-Zeit*, the Storm-and-Stress Period; for great indeed was the woe and fury of these Power-men. Beauty to their mind seemed synonymous with Strength. All passion was poetical, so it were but fierce enough. Their head moral virtue was Pride: their *beau idéal* of manhood was some transcript of Milton's Devil. Often they inverted Bolingbroke's plan, and instead of 'patronizing Providence,' did directly the opposite; raging with extreme animation against Fate in general, because it enthralled free virtue; and with clenched hands, or sounding shields, hurling defiance towards the vault of heaven.

These Power-men are gone too; and with few exceptions, save the three originals above named, their works have already followed them. The application of all this to our own literature is too obvious to require

much exposition. Have we not also had our Power-men? And will not, as in Germany, to us likewise a milder, a clearer, and a truer time come round? Our Byron was, in his youth, but what Schiller and Goethe had been in theirs: yet the author of *Werter* wrote *Iphigenie* and *Torquato Tasso*; and he who began with *The Robbers* ended with *Wilhelm Tell*. With longer life, all things were to have been hoped for from Byron: for he loved truth in his inmost heart, and would have discovered at last that his Corsairs and Harolds were not true. It was otherwise appointed: but with one man, all hope does not die. If this way is the right one, we too shall find it. The poetry of Germany, meanwhile, we cannot but regard as well deserving to be studied, in this as in other points of view: it is distinctly an advance beyond any other known to us; whether on the right path or not may be still uncertain; but a path selected by Schillers and Goethes, and vindicated by Schlegels and Tiecks, is surely worth serious examination. For the rest, need we add that it is study for self-instruction, nowise for purposes of imitation, that we recommend? Among the deadliest of poetical sins is imitation; for if every man must have his own way of thought, and his own way of expressing it, much more every nation. But of danger on that side, in the country of Shakespeare and Milton, there seems little to be feared.

We come now to the second grand objection against German literature, its *mysticism*. In treating of a subject itself so vague and dim, it were well if we tried, in the first place, to settle with more accuracy what each of the two contending parties really means to say or to contradict regarding it. Mysticism is a word in the mouths of all: yet of the hundred, perhaps not one has ever asked himself what this opprobrious epithet properly signified in his mind; or where the boundary between true Science and this Land of Chimeras was to be laid down. Examined strictly, *mystical*, in most cases, will turn out to be merely synonymous with *not understood*. Yet surely there may be haste and oversight here; for it is well known, that to the understanding of anything, *two* conditions are equally required; *intelligibility* in the thing itself being no whit more indispensable than *intelligence* in the examiner of it. ‘I am bound to find you in reasons, Sir,’ said Johnson, ‘but not ‘in brains;’ a speech of the most shocking unpoliteness, yet truly enough expressing the state of the case.

It may throw some light on this question, if we remind our readers of the following fact. In the field of human investigation there are objects of two sorts: First, the *visible*, including not only such as are material, and may be seen by the bodily eye, but all such, likewise, as may be represented in a *shape*, before the mind’s eye, or in any way pictured there: and secondly, the *invisible*, or such as are not only unseen by human eyes, but as cannot be seen by any eye; not objects of sense at all; not capable, in short, of being *pictured* or imaged in the mind, or in any way represented by a *shape* either without the mind or within it. If any man shall here turn upon us, and assert that there are no such invisible objects; that whatever cannot be so pictured or imagined (meaning *imaged*) is nothing, and the science that relates to it nothing; we shall regret the circumstance. We shall request him, however, to consider seriously and deeply within himself what he means simply by these two words, GOD and his own SOUL; and whether he finds that visible shape and true existence are here also one and the

same? If he still persist in denial, we have nothing for it, but to wish him good speed on his own separate path of inquiry; and he and we will agree to differ on this subject of mysticism as on so many more important ones.

Now, whoever has a material and visible object to treat, be it of natural Science, Political Philosophy, or any such externally and sensibly existing department, may represent it to his own mind, and convey it to the minds of others, as it were, by a direct diagram, more complex indeed than a geometrical diagram, but still with the same sort of precision; and provided his diagram be *complete*, and the *same* both to himself and his reader, he may reason of it, and discuss it, with the clearness, and, in some sort, the certainty of geometry itself. If he do not so reason of it, this must be for want of comprehension to image out the *whole* of it, or of distinctness to convey the *same* whole to his reader; the diagrams of the two are different; the conclusions of the one diverge from those of the other, and the obscurity here, provided the reader be a man of sound judgment and due attentiveness, results from incapacity on the part of the writer. In such a case, the latter is justly regarded as a man of imperfect intellect; he grasps more than he can carry; he confuses what, with ordinary faculty, might be rendered clear; he is not a mystic, but what is much worse, a dunce. Another matter it is, however, when the object to be treated of belongs to the invisible and immaterial class; cannot be pictured out even by the writer himself, much less in ordinary symbols set before the reader. In this case, it is evident, the difficulties of comprehension are increased an hundredfold. Here it will require long, patient, and skilful effort, both from the writer and the reader, before the two can so much as speak together; before the former can make known to the latter, not *how* the matter stands, but even *what* the matter *is*, which they have to investigate in concert. He must devise new means of explanation, describe conditions of mind in which this invisible idea arises, the false persuasions that eclipse it, the false shows that may be mistaken for it, the glimpses of it that appear elsewhere; in short, strive, by a thousand well-devised methods, to guide his reader up to the perception of it; in all which, moreover, the reader must faithfully and toilsomely co-operate with him, if any fruit is to come of their mutual endeavour. Should the latter take up his ground too early, and affirm to himself that now he has seized what he still has not seized; that this and nothing else is the thing aimed at by his teacher, the consequences are plain enough: disunion, darkness, and contradiction between the two; the writer has written for another man, and this reader, after long provocation, quarrels with him finally, and quits him as a *mystic*.

Nevertheless, after all these limitations, we shall not hesitate to admit, that there is in the German mind a tendency to mysticism, properly so called; as perhaps there is, unless carefully guarded against, in all minds tempered like theirs. It is a fault; but one hardly separable from the excellencies we admire most in them. A simple, tender, and devout nature, seized by some touch of divine Truth, and of this perhaps under some rude enough symbol, is rapt with it into a whirlwind of unutterable thoughts; wild gleams of splendour dart to and fro in the eye of the seer, but the vision will not abide with him, and yet he feels that its light is light from heaven, and precious to him beyond all price. A simple nature, a George Fox, or a Jacob Böhme, ignorant of all the ways of men, of the dialect in which they speak, or

the forms by which they think, is labouring with a poetic, a religious idea, which, like all such ideas, must express itself by word and act, or consume the heart it dwells in. Yet how shall he speak, how shall he pour forth into other souls, that of which his own soul is full even to bursting? He cannot speak to us; he knows not *our* state, and cannot make known to us his own. His words are an inexplicable rhapsody, a speech in an unknown tongue. Whether there is meaning in it to the speaker himself, and how much or how true, we shall never ascertain; for it is not in the language of men, but of one man who had not learned the language of men; and, with himself, the key to its full interpretation was lost from amongst us. These are mystics; men who either know not clearly their own meaning, or at least cannot put it forth in formulas of thought, whereby others, with whatever difficulty, may apprehend it. Was their meaning clear to themselves, gleams of it will yet shine through, how ignorantly and unconsciously soever it may have been delivered; was it still wavering and obscure, no science could have delivered it wisely. In either case, much more in the last, they merit and obtain the name of mystics. To scoffers they are a ready and cheap prey; but sober persons understand that pure evil is as unknown in this lower Universe as pure good; and that even in mystics, of an honest and deep-feeling heart, there may be much to reverence, and of the rest more to pity than to mock.

But it is not to apologize for Böhme, or Novalis, or the school of Theosophus and Flood, that we have here undertaken. Neither is it on such persons that the charge of mysticism brought against the Germans mainly rests. Böhme is little known among us; Novalis, much as he deserves knowing, not at all; nor is it understood, that in their own country these men rank higher than they do, or might do, with ourselves. The chief mystics in Germany, it would appear, are the Transcendental Philosophers, Kant, Fichte, and Schelling! With these is the chosen seat of mysticism; these are its 'tenebrific constellation,' from which it 'doth ray out darkness' over the earth. Among a certain class of thinkers, does a frantic exaggeration in sentiment, a crude fever-dream in opinion, anywhere break forth, it is directly labelled as Kantism; and the moon-struck speculator is, for the time, silenced and put to shame by this epithet. For often in such circles, Kant's Philosophy is not only an absurdity, but a wickedness and a horror; the pious and peaceful sage of Königsberg passes for a sort of Necromancer and Blackartist in Metaphysics; his doctrine is a region of boundless baleful gloom, too cunningly broken here and there by splendours of unholy fire; spectres and tempting demons people it; and hovering over fathomless abysses, hang gay and gorgeous air-castles, into which the hapless traveller is seduced to enter, and so sinks to rise no more.

If anything in the history of Philosophy could surprise us, it might well be this. Perhaps among all the metaphysical writers of the eighteenth century, including Hume and Hartley themselves, there is not one that so ill meets the conditions of a mystic as this same Immanuel Kant. A quiet, vigilant, clear-sighted man, who had become distinguished to the world in mathematics before he attempted philosophy; who, in his writings generally, on this and other subjects, is perhaps characterised by no quality so much as precisely by the distinctness of his conceptions, and the sequence and iron strictness with which he reasons. To our own minds, in the little that we know of him, he has more than once recalled Father Boscovich in Natural Philosophy; so

piercing, yet so sure ; so concise, so still, so simple ; with such clearness and composure does he mould the complicacy of his subject ; and so firm, sharp, and definite are the results he evolves from it.* Right or wrong as his hypothesis may be, no one that knows him will suspect that he himself had not seen it, and seen over it ; had not meditated it with calmness and deep thought, and studied throughout to expound it with scientific rigour. Neither, as we often hear, is there any superhuman faculty required to follow him. We venture to assure such of our readers as are in any measure used to metaphysical study, that the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* is by no means the hardest task they have tried. It is true, there is an unknown and forbidding terminology to be mastered ; but is not this the case also with Chemistry, and Astronomy, and all other sciences that deserve the name of science ? It is true, a careless or unprepared reader will find Kant's writing a riddle ; but will a reader of this sort make much of Newton's *Principia*, or D'Alembert's *Calculus of Variations* ? He will make nothing of them ; perhaps less than nothing ; for if he trust to his own judgment, he will pronounce them madness. Yet, if the Philosophy of Mind is any philosophy at all, Physics and Mathematics must be plain subjects compared with it. But these latter are happy, not only in the fixedness and simplicity of their methods, but also in the universal acknowledgment of their claim to that prior and continual intensity of application, without which all progress in any science is impossible ; though more than one may be attempted without it, and blamed, because without it they will yield no result.

The truth is, German Philosophy differs not more widely from ours in the substance of its doctrines, than in its manner of communicating them. The class of disquisitions, named *Cammin Philosophie* (Parlour-fire Philosophy) in Germany, is there held in little estimation. No right treatise on anything, it is believed, least of all on the nature of the human mind, can be profitably read, unless the reader himself co-operates : the blessing of half-sleep in such cases is denied him ; he must be alert, and strain every faculty, or it profits nothing. Philosophy, with these men, pretends to be a Science, nay, the living principle and soul of all Sciences, and must be treated and studied scientifically, or not studied and treated at all. Its doctrines should be present with every cultivated writer ; its spirit should pervade every piece of composition, how slight or popular soever ; but to treat itself popularly would be a degradation and an impossibility. Philosophy dwells aloft in the Temple of Science, the divinity of its inmost shrine ; her dictates descend among Men, but she herself descends not ; whoso would behold her must climb with long and laborious effort ; nay, still linger in the forecourt, till manifold trial have proved him worthy of admission into the interior solemnities.

It is the false notion prevalent respecting the objects aimed at, and the purposed manner of attaining them, in German Philosophy, that causes in great part this disappointment of our attempts to study it, and the evil report which the disappointed naturally enough bring back with them. Let the reader believe us, the Critical Philosophers, whatever they may be, are no mystics, and have no fellowship with

* We have heard, that the Latin Translation of his works is unintelligible, the Translator himself not having understood it ; also that Villiers is no safe guide in the study of him. Neither Villiers nor those Latin works are known to us.

mystics. What a mystic is, we have said above. But Kant, Fichte, and Schelling are men of cool judgment, and determinate energetic character; men of science and profound and universal investigation: nowhere does the world, in all its bearings, spiritual or material, theoretic or practical, lie pictured in clearer or truer colours than in such heads as these. We have heard Kant estimated as a spiritual brother of Böhme: as justly might we take Sir Isaac Newton for a spiritual brother of Count Swedenborg, and Laplace's *Mechanism of the Heavens* for a peristyle to the *Vision of the New Jerusalem*. That this is no extravagant comparison, we appeal to any man acquainted with any single volume of Kant's writings. Neither, though Schelling's system differs still more widely from ours, can we reckon Schelling a mystic. He is a man evidently of deep insight into individual things; speaks wisely, and reasons with the nicest accuracy, on all matters where we understand his data. Fairer might it be in us to say that we had not yet appreciated his truth, and *therefore* could not appreciate his error. But above all the mysticism of Fichte might astonish us. The cold, colossal, adamantine spirit, standing erect and clear, like a Cato Major, among degenerate men; fit to have been the teacher of the Stoa, and to have discoursed of Beauty and Virtue in the groves of Academe! Our reader has seen some words of Fichte's; are these like words of a mystic? We state Fichte's character, as it is known and admitted by men of all parties among the Germans, when we say, that so robust an intellect, a soul so calm, so lofty, massive, and immovable, has not mingled in philosophical discussion since the time of Luther. We figure his motionless look, had he heard this charge of mysticism! For the man rises before us, amid contradiction and debate, like a granite mountain amid clouds and winds. Ridicule, of the best that could be commanded, has been already tried against him; but it could not avail. What was the wit of a thousand wits to him? The cry of a thousand choughs assailing that old cliff of granite; seen from the summit, these as they winged the midway air showed scarce so gross as beetles, and their cry was seldom even audible. Fichte's opinions may be true or false; but his character, as a thinker, can be slightly valued only by such as know it ill; and as a man, approved by action and suffering, in his life and in his death, he ranks with a class of men who were common only in better ages than ours.

The Critical Philosophy has been regarded, by persons of approved judgment, and nowise directly implicated in the furthering of it, as distinctly the greatest intellectual achievement of the century in which it came to light. August Wilhelm Schlegel has stated in plain terms his belief, that, in respect of its probable influence on the moral culture of Europe, it stands on a line with the Reformation. We mention Schlegel as a man whose opinion has a known value among ourselves. But the worth of Kant's Philosophy is not to be gathered from votes alone. The noble system of morality, the purer theology, the lofty views of man's nature derived from it; nay, perhaps, the very discussion of such matters, to which it gave so strong an impetus, have told with remarkable and beneficial influence on the whole spiritual character of Germany. No writer of any importance in that country, be he acquainted or not with the Critical Philosophy, but breathes a spirit of devoutness and elevation more or less directly drawn from it. Such men as Goethe and Schiller cannot exist without effect in any literature or in any century; but if one circumstance more than another has contributed

to forward their endeavours, and introduce that higher tone into the literature of Germany, it has been this philosophical system; to which, in wisely believing its results, or even in wisely denying them, all that was lofty and pure in the genius of poetry or the reason of man so readily allied itself.

That such a system must in the end become known among ourselves, as it is already becoming known in France and Italy, and over all Europe, no one acquainted in any measure with the character of this matter, and the character of England, will hesitate to predict. Doubtless, it will be studied here, and by heads adequate to do it justice; it will be investigated duly and thoroughly; and settled in our minds on the footing which belongs to it, and where thenceforth it must continue. Respecting the degrees of truth and error which will then be found to exist in Kant's system, or in the modifications it has since received, and is still receiving, we desire to be understood as making no estimate, and little qualified to make any. We would have it studied and known, on general grounds; because, even the errors of such men are instructive; and because, without a large admixture of truth, no error *can* exist under such combinations, and become diffused so widely. To judge of it we pretend not: we are still inquirers in the mere outskirts of the matter; and it is but inquiry that we wish to see promoted.

Meanwhile, as an advance or first step towards this, we may state something of what has most struck ourselves as characterizing Kant's system; as distinguishing it from every other known to us; and chiefly from the Metaphysical Philosophy which is taught in Britain, or rather which *was* taught; for, on looking round, we see not that there is any such Philosophy in existence at the present day.* The Kantist, in direct contradiction to Locke and all his followers, both of the French and English or Scotch school, commences from within, and proceeds outwards; instead of commencing from without, and, with various precautions and hesitations, endeavouring to proceed inwards. The ultimate aim of all Philosophy must be to interpret appearances—from the given symbol to ascertain the thing. Now the first step towards this, the aim of what may be called Primary or Critical Philosophy, must be

* The name of Dugald Stewart is a name venerable to all Europe, and to none more dear and venerable than to ourselves. Nevertheless his writings are not a Philosophy, but a making ready for one. He does not enter on the field to till it, he only encompasses it with fences, invites cultivators, and drives away intruders; often (fallen on evil days) he is reduced to long arguments with the passers by, to prove that it *is* a field, that this so highly prized domain of his is, in truth, soil and substance, not clouds and shadow. We regard his discussions on the nature of philosophic Language, and his unwearied efforts to set forth and guard against its fallacies, as worthy of all acknowledgment; as indeed forming the greatest, perhaps the only true improvement which Philosophy has received among us in our age. It is only to a superficial observer that the import of these discussions can seem trivial: rightly understood, they give sufficient and final answer to Hartley's and Darwin's, and all other possible forms of Materialism, the grand Idolatry, as we may rightly call it, by which, in all times, the true Worship, that of the Invisible, has been polluted and withstood. Mr. Stewart has written warmly against Kant; but it would surprise him to find how much of a Kantist he himself essentially is. Has not the whole scope of his labours been to reconcile what a Kantist would call his Understanding with his Reason; a noble, but still too fruitless effort to overarch the chasm which, for all minds but his own, separates his Science from his Religion? We regard the assiduous study of his Works as the best preparation for studying those of Kant.

to find some indubitable principle ; to fix ourselves on some unchangeable basis ; to discover what the Germans call the *Urwahr*, the Primitive Truth, the necessarily, absolutely, and eternally *True*. This necessarily True, this absolute basis of Truth, Locke silently, and Reid and his followers with more tumult, find in a certain modified Experience, and evidence of Sense, in the universal and natural persuasion of all men. Not so the Germans ; they deny that there is here any absolute Truth, or that any Philosophy whatever can be built on such a basis ; nay, they go the length of asserting, that such an appeal even to the universal persuasions of mankind, gather them with what precautions you may, amounts to a total abdication of Philosophy, strictly so called, and renders not only its farther progress, but its very existence, impossible. What, they would say, have the persuasions, or instinctive beliefs, or whatever they are called, of men to do in this matter ? Is it not the object of Philosophy to enlighten, and rectify, and many times directly contradict these very beliefs ? Take, for instance, the voice of all generations of men on the subject of Astronomy. Will there, out of any age or climate, be one dissentient against the *fact* of the Sun's going round the Earth ? Can any Evidence be clearer ; is there any persuasion more universal, any belief more instinctive ? And yet the Sun moves no hairsbreadth ; but stands in the centre of his Planets, let us vote as we please. So is it likewise with our evidence for an external independent existence of Matter, and, in general, with our whole argument against Hume ; whose reasonings, from the premises admitted both by him and us, the Germans affirm to be rigorously consistent and legitimate, and on these premises altogether uncontroverted and incontrovertible. British Philosophy, since the time of Hume, appears to them nothing more than a ' laborious and unsuccessful striving to build ' dike after dike in front of our Churches and Judgment-halls, and so ' turn back from them the deluge of Scepticism, with which that extraordinary writer overflowed us, and still threatens to destroy whatever ' we value most.' This is Schlegel's meaning ; his words are not before us.

The Germans take up the matter differently, and would assail Hume, not in his outworks, but in the centre of his citadel. They deny his first principle, that Sense is the only inlet of Knowledge, that Experience is the primary ground of Belief. Their Primitive Truth, however, they seek not, historically and by experiment, in the universal persuasions of men, but by intuition, in the deepest and purest nature of Man. Instead of attempting, which they consider vain, to prove the existence of God, Virtue, an immaterial Soul, by inferences drawn, as the conclusion of all Philosophy, from the world of sense, they find these things written as the beginning of all Philosophy, in obscured but in ineffaceable characters, within our inmost being ; and themselves first affording any certainty and clear meaning to that very world of sense, by which we endeavour to demonstrate them. God *is*, nay alone *is*, for with like emphasis we cannot say that anything else is. This is the Absolute, the Primitively True, which the philosopher seeks. Endeavouring, by logical argument, to prove the existence of God, a Kantist might say, would be like taking out a candle to look for the sun ; nay, gaze steadily into your candle light, and the Sun himself may be invisible. To open the inward eye to the sight of this Primitively True ; or rather, we might call it, to clear off the obscurations of sense which eclipse this Truth within us, so that we may see it, and believe it not only to be true, but the foundation and essence of all

other truth, may, in such language as we are here using, be said to be the problem of Critical Philosophy.

In this point of view, Kant's system may be thought to have a remote affinity to those of Malebranche and Descartes. But if they in some measure agree as to their aim, there is the widest difference as to the means. We state what to ourselves has long appeared the grand characteristic of Kant's Philosophy, when we mention his distinction, seldom perhaps expressed so broadly, but uniformly implied, between Understanding and Reason (*Verstand* and *Vernunft*). To most of our readers this may seem a distinction without a difference; nevertheless, to the Kantists it is by no means such. They believe that both Understanding and Reason are organs, or rather we should say modes of operation, by which the mind discovers truth; but they think that their manner of proceeding is essentially different: that their provinces are separable and distinguishable, nay, that it is of the last importance to separate and distinguish them. Reason, the Kantists say, is of a higher nature than Understanding; it works by subtler methods on higher objects, and requires a far finer culture for its development; indeed in many men it is never developed at all: but its results are no less certain, nay rather they are much more so; for Reason discerns Truth itself, the absolutely and primitively *True*; while Understanding discerns only *relations*, and cannot decide without *if*. The proper province of Understanding is all, strictly speaking, *real*, practical, and material knowledge, Mathematics, Physics, Political Economy, the adaptation of means to ends in the whole business of life. In this province it is the strength and universal implement of the mind; an indispensable servant, without which, indeed, existence itself would be impossible. Let it not step beyond this province however, not usurp the province of Reason, which it is appointed to obey, and cannot rule over, without ruin to the whole spiritual man. Should Understanding attempt to prove the existence of God, it ends, if thoroughgoing and consistent with itself, in Atheism, or a faint possible Theism, which scarcely differs from this; should it speculate of Virtue, it ends in *Utility*, making Prudence and a sufficiently cunning love of Self the highest good. Consult Understanding about the Beauty of Poetry, and it asks, where is this Beauty? or discovers it at length in rhythms and fitnesses, and male and female rhymes. Witness also its everlasting paradoxes on the Necessity and Freedom of the Will; its ominous silence on the end and meaning of man; and the enigma which, under such inspection, the whole purport of existence becomes.

Nevertheless, say the Kantists, there is a truth in these things. Virtue is Virtue and not Prudence; not less surely than the angle in a semi-circle is a right angle, and no trapezium; Shakespeare is a Poet, and Boileau is none, think of it as you may: neither is it more certain that I myself exist, than that God exists, infinite, eternal, invisible, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. To discern these truths is the province of Reason, which therefore is to be cultivated as the highest faculty in man. Not by logic and argument does it work; yet surely and clearly may it be taught to work: and its domain lies in that higher region whither logic and argument cannot reach; in that holier region, where Poetry, and Virtue, and Divinity abide, in whose presence Understanding wavers and recoils, dazzled into utter darkness by that 'sea of light,' at once the fountain and the termination of all true knowledge.

Will the Kantists forgive us for the loose and popular manner in which we must here speak of these things, to bring them in any measure before the eyes of our readers?—It may illustrate this distinction still farther, if we say that, in the opinion of a Kantist, the French are of all European nations the most gifted with Understanding, and the most destitute of Reason*; that David Hume had no forecast of this latter, and that Shakespeare and Luther dwelt perennially in its purest sphere.

Of the vast, nay in these days boundless, importance of this distinction, could it be scientifically established, we need remind no thinking man. For the rest, far be it from the reader to suppose that this same Reason is but a new appearance, under another name, of our own old 'Wholesome Prejudice,' so well known to most of us! Prejudice, wholesome or unwholesome, is a personage for whom the German Philosophers disclaim all shadow of respect; nor do the vehement among them hide their deep disdain for all and sundry who fight under her flag. Truth is to be loved purely and solely because it is true. With moral, political, religious considerations, high and dear as they may otherwise be, the Philosopher as such has no concern. To look at them would but perplex him, and distract his vision from the task in his hands. Calmly he constructs his theorem, as the Geometer does his, without hope or fear, save that he may or may not find the solution; and stands in the middle, by the one, it may be, accused as an Infidel, by the other as an Enthusiast and a Mystic, till the tumult ceases, and what was true is and continues true to the end of all time.

Such are some of the high and momentous questions treated of, by calm, earnest, and deeply meditative men, in this system of Philosophy, which to the wiser minds among us is still unknown, and by the unwiser is spoken of and regarded as their nature requires. The profoundness, subtlety, extent of investigation, which the answer of these questions presupposes, need not be farther pointed out. With the truth or falsehood of the system we have here, as already stated, no concern: our aim has been, so far as might be done, to show it as it appeared to us; and to ask such of our readers as pursue these studies, whether this also is not worthy of some study? The reply we must now leave to themselves.

As an appendage to the charge of Mysticism brought against the Germans, there is often added the seemingly incongruous one of Irreligion. On this point also we had much to say; but must for the present decline it. Meanwhile, let the reader be assured, that to the charge of Irreligion, as to so many others, the Germans will plead not guilty. On the contrary, they will not scruple to assert that their literature is, in a positive sense, religious; nay, perhaps to maintain, that if ever neighbouring nations are to recover that pure and high spirit of devotion, the loss of which, however we may disguise it or pretend to overlook it, can be hidden from no observant mind, it must be by travelling, if not on the same path, at least in the same direction, in which the Germans have already begun to travel. We shall add, that the Religion of Germany is a subject not for slight but for deep study, and, if we mistake not, may in some degree reward the deepest.

* Schelling has said as much or more (*Methode des Academischen Studium*, pp. 105—111), in terms which we could wish we had space to transcribe.

Here, however, we must close our examination or defence. We have spoken freely, because we felt distinctly, and thought the matter worthy of being stated, and more fully inquired into. Farther than this, we have no quarrel for the Germans: we would have justice done to them, as to all men and all things; but for their literature or character, we profess no sectarian or exclusive preference. We think their recent Poetry, indeed, superior to the recent poetry of any other nation; but, taken as a whole, inferior to that of several; inferior not to our own only, but to that of Italy, nay, perhaps to that of Spain. Their Philosophy, too, must still be regarded as uncertain; at best only the beginning of better things. But surely even this is not to be neglected. A little light is precious in great darkness; nor amid the myriads of Poetasters and *Philosophes*, are Poets and Philosophers so numerous that we should reject such, when they speak to us in the hard, but manly, deep, and expressive tones of that old Saxon speech, which is also our mother-tongue.

We confess, the present aspect of spiritual Europe might fill a melancholic observer with doubt and foreboding. It is mournful to see so many noble, tender, and high-aspiring minds deserted of that religious light which once guided all such; standing sorrowful on the scene of past convulsions and controversies, as on a scene blackened and burnt up with fire; mourning in the darkness, because there is desolation, and no home for the soul; or, what is worse, pitching tents among the ashes, and kindling weak earthly lamps, which we are to take for stars. This darkness is but transitory obscurity; these ashes are the soil of future herbage and richer harvests. Religion, Poetry, is not dead; it will never die. Its dwelling and birthplace is in the soul of man, and it is eternal as the being of man. In any point of Space, in any section of Time, let there be a living Man; and there is an Infinitude above him and beneath him, and an Eternity encompasses him on this hand and on that; and tones of Sphere-music, and tidings from loftier Worlds, will flit round him, if he can but listen, and visit him with holy influences, even in the thickest press of trivialities, or the din of busiest life. Happy the man, happy the nation, that can hear these tidings; that has them written in fit characters, legible to every eye, and the solemn import of them present at all moments to every heart! That there is, in these days, no nation so happy, is too clear; but that all nations, and ourselves in the van, are, with more or less discernment of its nature, struggling towards this happiness, is the hope and the glory of our time. To us, as to others, success, at a distant or a nearer day, cannot be uncertain. Meanwhile, the first condition of success is, that in striving honestly ourselves, we honestly acknowledge the striving of our neighbour; that with a Will unwearied in seeking Truth, we have a Sense open for it, wheresoever and howsoever it may arise.*

* A critical examination of all that has been written in the Edinburgh Review on the subject of German Literature and Philosophy would enable the reader to detect many glaring discrepancies. The contributions were obviously from different writers; and, it must be acknowledged, not all possessed of equal information and ability. See Vol. vi. page 343. Vol. xxvi. pages 67 and 304. Vol. xlii. page 409. Vol. xliii. page 107. In the Review of Madame de Stael's Germany, a profound and brilliant article, the production of a master-mind, there are some admirable remarks on the character and progress of German Literature. Vol. xxii. page 199. See also a Review of Taylor's Historic Survey of German Poetry. Vol. liii. p. 151.

PROGRESS OF ENGLISH HISTORICAL WRITING.*

THOUGH England ranks probably next to Germany in the richness of her historical collections, and particularly in published records and authentic materials, the progress of historical literature, in its higher departments, might long be considered rather slow, when compared with the general taste for learning, the freedom of our government, and the national pride with which we have venerated our forefathers. Italy had produced a long line of historians, some of extraordinary merit; Spain, a few, according to the proportion of her literature; France, several, who, though belonging to the order of chroniclers and memoir-writers, retain their place in the library and in public estimation, before any one had appeared in this country who is at this time either approved or even remembered. This was unquestionably owing, in the first instance, to the slower cultivation of the English language; but other circumstances appear to have concurred, to which we may presently advert. A short sketch of what has hitherto been written in the way of English history, confining ourselves, however, to the vernacular language, or translations into it, will be no improper commencement of this article on the latest work which has been published on the subject.

Among the earliest fruits that now remain of the application of the English tongue to purposes of instruction, is Trevisa's translation of the *Polychronicon* of Ranulph Higden, a monk of Chester. The original work is a farrago of all events whereof the author had read, from the creation of the world to the year 1357; the latter part relating chiefly to the contemporaneous annals of England. This chronicle, either on account of its miscellaneous and comprehensive nature, or from the circumstance of its being translated into English, has, more than any other, supplied the canvass for our general history. Trevisa's translation of Higden was printed by Caxton in 1483, with a continuation by himself, from the year 1357 to 1460. In the preface to this, our venerable printer complains of the almost total want of materials, so that he had been forced to rely on two books published in Germany, and now very obscure. It is hardly necessary to say, that better materials existed in manuscript; but it was not reasonable to expect that he should desist from his valuable labours to procure them. Another book, commonly called *Caxton's Chronicles*, and printed by him in 1480, is written by one Douglas, a monk of Glastonbury, and contains partly a version, partly a continuation, of Geoffrey of Monmouth, brought down to the accession of Edward IV. This chronicle, under the name of Caxton, was more than once reprinted; but is now so obscure, as well as so brief and unsatisfactory, that we should not have thought of naming it, except as the earliest English publication upon our history.

Robert Fabyan, an Alderman of London, and member of the Draper's Company, may be reckoned, with more justice, the father of English historians. His '*New Chronicles of England and France*' were first published in 1516, which seems to have been four years after his death.

* A History of England, from the Invasion by the Romans. By John Lingard, D.D. Eight vols. 4to. London, 1819-1830. — Vol. liii. page 1. March, 1831.

They were several times reprinted; and a valuable edition was given to the world, in 1811, by Mr. Ellis of the British Museum. Fabian shows himself a zealous Catholic, which caused some phrases to be suppressed in editions subsequent to the Reformation, and as good a citizen of London as his ward could desire; heading the annals of each year with the names of the mayor and sheriffs, as Livy begins those of Rome with the consuls, and communicating many little particulars about the city, which at present form the most original part of his volume. For his more general materials he had mainly recourse to Higden, but consulted likewise a good many Latin and French authors, so that his name deserves to be held in respect; and his chronicle, though it would be absurd to recommend its perusal, remains a monument of honest diligence, especially praiseworthy in one of his occupation in life, and, as there is reason to believe, of affluent fortune.

In the long reign of Henry VIII. nothing more seems to have come from the press, to our present purpose, than Rastell's Pastime of People, a most jejune epitome of English history; which, on account of its extreme scarceness, and also of certain wooden cuts, which were supposed too ugly to be lost, has, within the last twenty years, been republished by Dr. Dibdin: to which may be added, a Chronicle by Cooper, afterwards a bishop, and one or two more mentioned in Nicolson's Historical Library. But, in 1548, the second year of Edward VI., a far more important accession was made to this branch of our literature, in the Chronicle of Thomas Hall, or, according to the original titlepage, 'The Union of the two Noble and Illustrious Families of Lancaster and York.' This began with the accession of Henry IV., in 1399, and ended with the death of Henry VIII. Hall himself died the year before the publication. Robert Grafton, an eminent printer, not only performed the office of an editor, but compiled, from Hall's manuscripts, the annals of about fifteen years. It is singular, that the last editor of Ames's Typographical Antiquities, copying apparently his immediate predecessor, should have said — 'He [Grafton] tells us himself that he wrote the greater part of Hall's Chronicles, but without particularizing how much.' Grafton is not only more precise than is here represented, but his precision entirely contradicts the editor's statement. 'The author thereof,' he says, in his address to the reader, 'was a man, in the latter time of his life, not so painful and studious as before he had been; wherefore, he perfected and writ this history no farther than to the four-and-twentieth year of King Henry the Eighth; the rest he left noted in divers and many pamphlets and papers, which, so diligently and truly as I could, I gathered the same together, and have, in such wise, compiled them, as may after the said years appear in this work, *but utterly without any addition of mine.*'

Bishop Nicolson observes of Hall, 'If the reader desires to know what sort of clothes were worn in each king's reign, and how the fashions altered, this is an historian for his purpose; but in other matters his information is not so valuable.*' This sentence is, in our opinion, by much too sweeping and novel. We do not perceive that Hall has any great excess of that petty information that the Bishop derides as so trifling, though it is not without its use for several purposes; but a little more candour and attention would have shown him, that a considerable proportion of the knowledge we possess as to the

* Nicolson's Hist. Library, p. 71.

internal history of England during the reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. is due to this respectable chronicler, who has been largely copied by those who followed. It would be hard to say whom else we could vouch for the narrative of the different rebellions and insurrections under Henry VII., or for the tumultuous resistance of the citizens and commons to the illegal encroachments of Wolsey. The truth of these facts is confirmed by contemporary letters and authentic records; but such documents rarely furnish the whole circumstances of a transaction, as we find them collected by the historian. Polydore Virgil, the only other writer who can be called original, is much inferior to Hall in credibility. The character of Hall is that of an honest and fearless simplicity, wherein it was very long before any one was found to equal him; if indeed, considering the change of times, it can be said that he ever had an equal.

We ought, perhaps, sooner to have mentioned the celebrated ‘*Pitiful Life of King Edward the Fifth*,’ by Sir Thomas More. But we have not been able to satisfy ourselves, without pretending, however, to have made a laborious search, as to the date of its earliest publication. It is printed in the folio edition of his works by Rastell, in 1557. But we also find it inserted verbatim in Hall’s Chronicle, published, as has been said above, in 1548. Whether Hall, or his editor Grafton, had preserved the manuscript, or whether there is some earlier edition which we have not been able to trace, more learned antiquarians will determine. None is mentioned in Dibdin’s *Typographical Antiquities*, containing a long list of the works that came from the presses of all known printers in that age, and especially of Rastell, brother-in-law of More: it seems plain also, from the historic doubts of Horace Walpole, that he did not know when the book was first published. We may add, that the marginal note in Hall rather leads us to presume, that the work of More then appeared for the first time. However this may be, it was probably written in More’s youth, while he was under-sheriff of London: its composition has been referred by some to the year 1513. It is unnecessary to speak of the credibility of this narrative, which has encountered such severity from Walpole and Laing, some of whose strictures Mr. Turner and Dr. Lingard have shown to be unjust; but in its style it may be said to form a sort of epoch, especially if we suppose it to have been published not long after its composition, in our native literature. Unlike the senile laboriousness of Fabian, it is written with manifest emulation of classical models;—it is *ornata verbis, distincta sententiis*, such as might be expected from the friend and pupil of Erasmus, taming a reluctant language to somewhat affected graces, and anticipating with uncertain endeavours the copiousness and harmony it was one day destined to display. It has been said to be unfinished, and this would afford a presumption that it was a posthumous publication; but the assertion does not seem well founded, the story terminating with the murder of the two princes in the Tower, beyond which there is no proof that he intended to carry it.

Grafton himself published an abridgment of the Chronicles of England in 1562; and Stow, a learned and diligent tailor of London, a summary of the same in 1565. Both works are dedicated to the Earl of Leicester, whose many faults were partially redeemed by a disposition to patronise learning. Stow and Grafton are said to have been jealous of each other’s credit; there can, however, be no doubt of the former’s superiority, though an unfortunate predilection for the more antient

church, so often suspected in our antiquarians since the Reformation, kept him under a cloud in his lifetime, and sometimes exposed his papers to the rude hands of pursuivants and messengers. In 1569, Grafton, who was printer to the Queen, put forth ‘A Chronicle at large, and new History of the affairs of England, and Kings of the same, deduced from the creation of the world unto the first habitation of this island, and so by continuance unto the first year of the reign of our most dear and sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth.’ This Chronicle of Grafton may be divided into two parts. In the first, from the creation of the world to the accession of Henry IV., being about one-third of the whole, he follows the Polychronicon of Higden, and Fabyan’s Chronicle, with occasional assistance from Malmsbury, Hoveden, and other Latin historians of our country. Buchanan, according to Bishop Nicolson, calls him a very heedless and unskilful writer; a character which no one is likely to dispute. It may be added, rather as illustrative of the times than of Grafton’s work, that he is one of the most cautious, if not dastardly, performers that ever undertook the annals of a free nation. We can hardly hope to be believed on our word, when we assert that, in writing the reign of John, he has made no mention whatever of Magna Charta; an omission ‘of the part of Hamlet,’ which can scarcely be imputed to mere confusion and ignorance. The following is a more definite instance of the queen’s printer’s cautiousness. At the year 1112 we read — ‘At this time began the Parliament in England first to be instituted and advanced for reformation and government of this realm. The manner whereof, as I have found it set forth in an old pamphlet, I intend at large to set forth in the reign of King Edward III., where and when Parliaments were yearly and orderly kept.’ In his preface, however, we find this noticed in the following words: — ‘And where I have, in the thirteenth year of King Henry I., promised to place the manner and order that was first taken for the holding of the Parliament in the time of King Edward the Third, I have since that time thought meet to omit the same, and therefore I admonish the reader not to look for it.’ The rest of Grafton’s Chronicle, from the accession of Henry IV., with the exception, of course, of the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary, is nothing more than a republication of Hall, the differences being not so great as frequently take place in successive editions of the same work; in fact, we believe it would be found that Grafton did not insert any one phrase or sentence, though he softened in many places the warm and zealous language of his predecessor.

A more useful, laborious, and celebrated compiler of English affairs than Grafton, was Raphael Holingshed, who, after twenty-five years employed in the task for Wolfe the printer, brought out, in 1577, his Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland, in two large volumes folio. This first edition is remarkably scarce. A second, in three volumes, appeared in 1587. Of this several sheets were suppressed by order of the Privy Council, but a very few copies escaped mutilation, and the obnoxious passages have been separately printed in later times. What is remarkable is, that no very obvious motive for this interference of the council appears on the face of them. Holingshed was assisted in this vast work by several coadjutors — Harrison, Hooker (sometimes called Vowell), Stanyhurst, Thyn, and Stow. In point of erudition they much exceed the preceding chroniclers; several Latin works are inserted in verbatim translations, and some degree of critical

judgment is exercised upon the early and obscure periods of history. The most useful portions at present are the description of Britain, by Harrison, in the first volume, and the annals of Elizabeth's reign, by Holingshed himself, continued by Thyn and Stow. In these, however, for obvious reasons, nothing more than ordinary facts can be expected to appear. Like Grafton, though not so indiscriminately, he transcribes Hall; yet our modern historians are apt either to quote Holingshed alone, or to refer to both as distinct and independent sources.

The 'Acts and Monuments' of John Fox, more usually called his Book of Martyrs, must have a place among the principal historical works of the sixteenth century. None certainly can be compared to it in its popularity and influence. Four editions of these bulky folios were published in the reign of Elizabeth; the first in 1563. It may not be too much to say, that it confirmed the Reformation in England. Every parish (by order of the council, or the bishops, we forget which,) was to have a copy in the church; and every private gentleman, who had any book but the Bible, chose that which stood next in religious esteem. Whatever be the amount of the mistakes into which the pretty common habit of assuming the truth of facts, according to an estimate previously formed of the characters of those concerned in them, may have led our worthy martyrologist, it is certain that we owe him thanks for collecting and inserting at length a great body of documents illustrative of our civil and ecclesiastical history.

In the long and, comparatively at least with former times, the learned reign of Elizabeth, no other contribution appears to have been made to the history of our own country in our own language, except a short work by Sir John Hayward, in 1599, entitled, 'The first part of the Life and Reign of King Henry IV., extending to the end of the first year of his reign.' This is deemed a rhetorical performance of little value, and chiefly remarkable for the persecution it brought upon him at the hands of that jealous government. Bacon, in his Apophthegms, relates a sally of his own wit, by which he saved the unfortunate author from his angry sovereign. 'The queen,' he says, 'asked Mr. Bacon whether there were not treason contained in the book.—“Nay, madam,” he answered, “for treason I cannot deliver my opinion that there is any, but very much felony.” The queen, apprehending it, gladly asked, “How and where?” Mr. Bacon answered, “Because he hath stolen many of his sentences and conceits out of Cornelius Tacitus.”' At another time, the queen threatened to have Hayward racked, to discover the real author, whom she suspected to be disguised. Bacon advised her rather to rack his style; to shut him up with pen, ink, and paper, and let him try if he could write like it. According to Camden, the offence was taken at the dedication to the Earl of Essex, wherein he was called '*Magnus et præsentis judicio, et futuri temporis expectatione.*' Not having access to Hayward's book, we quote Camden's words in Latin. Hayward remained for a considerable time in prison.

The spirit of the Tudor government, evinced in this severity towards Sir John Hayward, as well as in the castigation of Holingshed's second edition, goes far to account for the paucity of English historical writers in the sixteenth century. Meanwhile, there was no deficiency of materials for men of learning, nor any want of interest among them for the preservation of the records of antiquity. Leland, Bale, Pitts, Tanner, Archbishop Parker, among others of less note, diligently laboured in

collecting relics of past times, which the devastation committed among the monasteries rendered valuable by their scarcity, if not always by their importance. The public repositories were constantly searched by lawyers, and by those who sought arrows from the quiver of antient precedent for the recovery of their constitutional privileges. Perhaps, indeed, the multiplicity of authentic records, and the practice of relying upon them in all legal and parliamentary questions, rather tended to discourage the composition of regular history, wherein it was not so much the practice as at present to vouch the authorities on which it was founded. But the former cause had doubtless a more powerful efficacy.

Two chroniclers, of that rather humble name, as it began to be reckoned, belong to the reign of James I., Stow and Speed, both tailors. The former's *Summary of the Chronicles of England*, an octavo volume, has already been mentioned; it was reprinted several times, as was also an abridgment of it, in the reign of Elizabeth. An enlargement of the Summaries, under the title '*Flores Historiarum*,' was published in 1600. After the death of Stow, his collection of papers, which the industry of a long life had amassed, fell into the hands of Edmond Howes, who, having put them together with additions of his own, printed the whole under the name of *Stow's Chronicle*. The first edition is in 1615. The preceding year Speed had published '*The History of Great Britain under the Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans*,' in one volume folio. Nicolson, although he gives some praise to this book, adds, rather foolishly, 'but what could be expected from a tailor?' The imputation of appertaining to a trade so essential to civilized man, and especially to the courtiers of Elizabeth and James, is more than redeemed by Speed's diligence and learning, in which he seems inferior to none of his predecessors, except Stow, a member also of the cross-legged craft. He is, however, less agreeable than either Stow or Holingshed.

A far more able pen was employed on the same subject by Samuel Daniel, groom of the chamber to Anne of Denmark, an elegant poet, not quite unworthy to receive, as he did, the laurel from Spenser, and to transmit it to Ben Jonson. He published, in 1613 and 1616, a very well-written history of England from the Norman conquest, after an introduction for the previous period, to the death of Edward III. In this he had occasional recourse to records, used more critical judgment in sifting facts than those who had gone before him, and, if he is now superseded as an historian, ought still to be remembered in the annals of English literature for the purity and elegance of his style.

Daniel's history was continued some time afterwards by Nicholas Trussel to the death of Edward IV.; but this is said to be a very indifferent performance, and has not been republished along with Daniel in Kennet's '*Complete History*.' Lord Bacon's *Life of Henry VII.* appeared in 1622, and proved that in this hardly trodden path of literature, we were not incapable of emulating the Italian writers in what they had made their main boast, the acuteness and depth of their political reflections. After so fine a specimen of genius, it is only to make our enumeration complete, that we mention the lives of the three first kings after the conquest, published by Sir John Hayward in 1613. Meantime Camden, for whatever reason, thought fit to adopt the Latin language in his *Annals of Elizabeth*; yet, as that important work was soon translated, it may be named, without much impropriety, in the

series of English history. Bishop Godwin published also, in Latin, the Annals of Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Mary. They were translated in the ensuing reign by his son.

A few select portions of English history were attempted under Charles I. Sir John Hayward wrote the reign of Edward VI.; Thomas Habington that of Edward IV.; and George Buck anticipated the paradox of Walpole and Laing, in sustaining the dark cause of Richard III. The much more valuable Life of Henry VIII., by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, did not appear till 1649, a year after the author's death. Less profound, but not less judicious, and certainly more fully to be trusted in the absence of other authorities, than Lord Bacon, he stands far above any third English historian who had as yet appeared, and might challenge comparison with the celebrated Latin annalist of Elizabeth. In the reign of Charles also came to light the Life of Sir Thomas More, by his son-in-law Roper, and that of Wolsey by Cavenish; but we cannot pretend to enumerate any more works of biography, even when they may throw light on public events.

The last and not the least renowned of the chroniclers was Sir Richard Baker, who prudently acted on the plan of not troubling the unlearned reader with references to authorities he could not estimate, or curious disquisitions on antiquity; for which, indeed, his own residence in the Fleet prison did not particularly qualify him. Baker's Chronicle, first published in 1641, enjoyed a pretty extensive reputation for the best part of a century. It was the book of the parlour-window to the squire, the parson, and the antient gentlewoman; they read there the fatal bowl held out to fair Rosamond in her secret bower by the revengeful Eleanor, the glorious apotheosis of the Countess of Salisbury's garter, the dying pangs of Jane Shore, and the rejection of the Princess Bona for the beautiful Elizabeth Woodville. A frigid inquisitiveness had not torn away the stolen zone of truth from these false Florimels of our antient story. As Holingshed was a very bulky and expensive writer, and Speed not an interesting one, the success of Baker is not surprising. Nicolson says, 'his manner is new, and seems to please the rabble; but learned men will be of a different opinion.' In fact, it is a book full of great errors in the eyes of such men; yet has probably given more pleasure, and diffused more universal knowledge, than what they would have written. It was enough for Sir Roger de Coverley; but since the Sir Rogers are extinct, it is natural that their instructors should be forgotten. After the Restoration, a continuation of Baker's Chronicle, which ended with Elizabeth's decease, was annexed to the subsequent editions by Thomas Philips, who is understood to have had some assistance from Sir Thomas Clarges, brother-in-law of General Monk, for the contemporary period. May's History of the Parliament, published in 1647, is upon a more regular and classical model than any former author had adopted; and had he completed the whole with as much moderation and coolness as we find in what is published, which, there is some reason to suspect, would not have been the case, no historian of that century would have deserved a higher reputation. We shall not mention in future either memoirs by persons concerned in public events, or particular accounts of detached periods, making one exception for Milton's History of England to the Norman Conquest, for the sake of the greatness of his name, and in some measure for the value of the work.

The struggle between liberty and prerogative, resumed, with still greater dissent of opinion than before, about the year 1680, produced a learned controversy as to the antiquity of the Commons in Parliament, and the sources, in general, of popular privileges. Dr. Brady, a physician of Cambridge, devoted to the support of monarchical authority in its highest claims, having published, in 1684, an answer to Petyt and Atwood, the advocates of Parliamentary rights, entitled, ‘An Introduction to the Old English History,’ followed this up next year with the first volume of a complete history of England; the second not appearing till 1700, and carrying down the narrative to the close of Richard II.’s reign. This work, being little else than a series of extracts, translated from Matthew Paris, Walsingham, and others, arranged merely as annals, and confined chiefly to the constitutional and Parliamentary department, can hardly be reckoned among our general histories. Tyrrell, as strenuous on the Whig as Brady was on the Tory side, thought it necessary to refute the unfair representations of the latter in five folio volumes, — ‘A General History of England, both Civil and Ecclesiastical, from the earliest times;’ printed from 1700 to 1704. It is said that his design was to bring it down to the revolution in 1688; a miscalculation either of his own or his readers’ time, since the pretty serious achievement above mentioned conducts us only to the days of Richard II. Of a work so diffuse as to be almost equally useless to the learned and the unlearned, since it would save time to read the original writers, it is needless to say much: we have heard Tyrrell praised by a competent judge for his industry and fairness in the detail of constitutional antiquities.

We have now come down to the reign of Anne, and to the eighteenth century; and it cannot be said that any one history of England existed, to which a foreigner could be referred, or from which a citizen might learn the story of his ancestors; those which we have enumerated, being either written with little research and discrimination, or broken off at a very distant point of time. Lawrence Echard, a clergyman, attempted to remove this discredit by his own ‘History of England from the time of Julius Cæsar to the death of King James I.,’ published in 1706; the second and third volumes, which came out in 1718, carrying on the narrative to the revolution of 1688. Considered as to its extent, this was the most complete history that had appeared; but Echard, though not a very bad writer, failed both in impartiality and good sense when he descended to the great contention of the preceding age. Yet, as he fell in with the prejudices of a very numerous body, the Tory and High-church party, and, though with no original information much worthy of credit, had the advantage of several highly-important works printed within forty years before, which had not yet been reduced into a single narration, he seems for some years to have enjoyed a certain popularity.

This popularity, however, must be ascribed in a very low sense to Echard, when compared with what was obtained by another historian in a few more years. Strange it seems, that the first history of England, which exercised any considerable influence over the national opinion, or acquired a permanent reputation, was to come from the pen of a Frenchman.

Quod minimè reris, Graiâ pandetur ab urbe.

Rapin de Thoyras, of an antient family in Languedoc, was one of those Protestants whom the tyranny of Louis XIV. drove to England in 1685. He obtained a small pension from William III., and the Earl of Portland intrusted to him the education of his son. Motives of economy induced him afterwards to settle at Wesel, in the duchy of Cleves, where he undertook and completed, after a labour of near twenty years, his well-known History of England. This was first published at the Hague in seventeen volumes, the last in 1725; and two translations of it, by Tindal and by Kelly, appeared within a very few years. The former is the best known, on account of the continuation down to 1760, which, though bearing all along the name of Tindal, is understood to have been written, in the latter volumes, by Dr. Birch. Rapin had the advantage of correcting the loose and slovenly narrative of his predecessors, especially as to names and dates, by means of the recent publication of Rymer's *Fœdera*, which he studied with great care, and from which he had previously published a selection of treatises and other important documents, entitled *Acta Regia*. Yet all the earlier part of his history is very inexact, according to the measure of our present knowledge: and he is little worthy of perusal before the reign of Henry VIII. From that period, his probity and love of truth render him a very respectable, though not profound or lively, writer; he has preserved entire several public documents—a practice, which, if not quite agreeable to the critical laws of composition, is highly convenient in such a history as that of England—and has been diligent in comparing his materials, and in allowing for the distortion of party prejudice. A slight bias towards the Parliamentary side is sometimes perceptible in his relation of the reign of Charles I. But the unfortunate situation of Rapin, not only as a foreigner, but as resident in a foreign country, seems to have kept him in ignorance of much that was necessary for an English historian; a more striking instance of which cannot be mentioned, than that he never quotes, and apparently did not know, the existence of Whitelock's Memorials, a book of such standard character for the period of the civil wars, and the first edition of which had been published nearly forty years.

Guthrie, one of the first who practised the trade of serving the booksellers with copy by the ream, produced, in 1744, three very thick folio volumes, with double columns, according to the fashion of that time, denominated a History of England. Of his predecessor, he observes: 'Rapin's history appeared at a time when the principles on which he wrote were useful to a party, who therefore powerfully recommended it from the press, of which they were then masters. To this, and to the ridiculous prepossession that a foreigner was best fitted to write the English history, was owing the reception it met with from the public.' This is foolish enough, considering that no party could at that time be called masters of the press, any more than when Guthrie himself wrote, and leads us to expect a less temperate performance than we really find. This history, however, seems not deficient in general impartiality, though with about as much leaning towards the Royalist as Rapin shows towards the Parliamentary side. But, as it was uncommonly diffuse, inconvenient from bulkiness, and proceeded from a man who had no literary reputation sufficient to warrant what he wrote without vouching authorities, and who seemed to have had recourse to none but such as were common, he so far from

succeeded in his expectation of superseding the foreigner whom he disparaged, that few books of the kind are lower in price and reputation at the present moment. It was not much better in his own age: Horace Walpole said sarcastically, when some reviewer quoted Guthrie's History, that 'he himself was conversant with the living works of dead authors, not the dead works of the living.' We will deviate so far from our system of mentioning no history which relates to a particular period, as to praise the very prolix, but useful and able Ralph, who, in the years 1744 and 1746, was delivered of two immense folios, which comprise the term of forty years, from the Restoration to the death of William III.; and which have been raised by the commendation bestowed on them by Mr. Fox, and by the attention thus shown to their merit, from complete neglect to a considerable price in catalogues. Ralph, however, is not impartial, or always fair, in his political opinions; a strong dislike to William III. leavening his second volume; and he seems on the whole to have wished rather to please the Tories of his own age, changed as they had been by long exclusion from power, than the Whigs, who had as long breathed the air of a court. As Ralph had the reputation of letting his pen to hire in factious pamphlets, some suspicion, though perhaps unjustly, might fall on his sincerity in this greater work.

A far superior writer to Guthrie, or even Rapin, was Thomas Carte, a nonjuring clergyman, distinguished for his beautiful edition of Thuanus, commonly called Buckley's, his Life of the Duke of Ormond, and several other contributions to historical literature. A large subscription enabled him to undertake a History of England, to be founded on more extensive researches than had hitherto been required. The universal exactness of historical learning, the diligence shown in topographical and biographical illustrations of past times, the controversies as to political and personal character, the prevailing spirit of scepticism, sometimes acute, sometimes excessive, but always demanding industry to repel it, had raised the standard of truth both in narration and discussion of general facts; so that errors which, if observed at all, would have been slighted a century before, assumed a new magnitude in the microscope of an antiquary or controversial disputant. Carte appeared, by his industry and command of materials, well qualified to fill a post which as yet was but imperfectly supplied by a foreigner. In 1747, he published the first volume of a 'History of England, by Thomas Carte, an Englishman.' It was immediately evident that he was master of his ground in a very different degree from any of his predecessors. Not only the collection of Rymer, but the Rolls of Parliament, hitherto unknown, except by an incorrect abridgment, and other archives of our antient government, were made contributory to his purpose. It might, indeed, have been predicted that an honest jacobite could scarcely give such a colour to the Tudor and Stuart reigns, to say nothing of older times, as the friends of constitutional liberty were likely to approve. But Carte managed to anticipate their objections by inserting in his first volume a story of one Thomas Lovell, who, being afflicted with a scrofulous complaint, had recovered his health on being touched at Avignon 'by the descendant of a long line of kings.' The loyal subjects of the House of Hanover took the alarm; the city of London withdrew its subscription; and Carte was compelled to prosecute his task with very diminished assistance from

the public, and a slur on the reputation of his work. He did not yield to those discouragements: a second volume appeared in 1750, a third in 1752, and a fourth in 1755. This, however, brings down the history only to 1654, instead of the Revolution, as originally designed. Carte is certainly no concise writer. On a loose calculation we find that, down to the reign of James I., his letter-press is to that of Rapin about as three to two; to that of Hume as nine to four; and to that of Dr. Lingard, less than two to one. This prolixity, and the inconvenience of the folio size, which excludes so many books of antient repute from the tables of a more indolent generation, have rendered Carte's History, comparatively even with Rapin, an obscure book. As far, however, as the reign of James I. inclusive, he is incomparably superior to Rapin in copiousness of materials and accuracy of statement. Instead of confining himself, like his predecessor, to the more common printed authorities, he sought access to original papers, both in Paris and London; and perhaps fell sometimes into the not unusual fault of relying too much on rare and unpublished documents when they disagreed with popular history. It is hardly necessary to observe, that Carte is to be read with great caution on all subjects of constitutional privileges.

The last volume of Carte had not issued from the press when an eminent writer, conspicuous already for a diversified and brilliant, though sometimes too eccentric career over the fields of literature and philosophy, undertook a labour not apparently very congenial to the habits of his mind, as they had hitherto been displayed, in a History of the House of Stuart. Hume published the first volume of this in 1754, and the second in 1756. The History of the House of Tudor followed, at equal length, in 1759; and two more volumes in 1761, by a curiously retrograde process, completed the usual course from Julius Cæsar to the Revolution. Eulogy is superfluous on a work which is not only the greatest monument of historical literature in our language, but in many respects equal, perhaps, to any which either antient or modern Italy has produced. Many have excelled, and others will hereafter excel, Hume in their knowledge of the spirit of antiquity, in their exactness and circumstantiality of narration, and, what is more important, in their rigorous adherence to the laws of moral and historical truth in the estimate of political transactions and characters. But we can hardly hope to see his rival in reflections usually just and often profound, without the involution of mystical pedantry, in the harmonious subordination of illustrative digressions to the main stream of history, or still less, perhaps, in a style equally fitted for narration and for dissertation, — easy without being feeble, simple without dryness, and, if not always free from a little affectation in idiom, never losing its elegance in redundant ornament or learned abstraction.

It has been often asserted that Hume has made great use of Carte's History, especially in his first two volumes; and he has even been called his copyist. We have had the curiosity to compare a few passages at random, and the result is, to a great extent, in confirmation of this fact. We mean only, that Hume appears to have written with Carte always open before him, and to have followed him, generally speaking, not only in the arrangement of events, but in the structure of his exposition of them; giving, however, the colour of his own thoughts and style to the whole narration, and continually, as we believe, both verifying the statements of his predecessor, and adding what

he thought requisite to his own by a reference to the original sources. As this is a matter of some literary curiosity, we will insert two very short extracts in order to exhibit this parallelism.

‘ Henry was hunting in the New Forest when he heard the news of his brother William’s death; and resolving to make a push for the throne, went immediately to the Castle of Winchester to demand the keys of the royal treasury, which the guards made some difficulty in delivering. They were in the custody of William de Breteuil, (the eldest son of William Fits-Osborn, formerly Earl of Hereford,) who was likewise in another quarter of the forest, when, being surprised with an account of the king’s death, he made all possible haste home to take care of his charge; and, arriving in the middle of the dispute, told the young prince that neither the treasure nor the sceptre of England belonged to him, but to his elder brother Robert, to whom he and others of the chief nobility had already done homage. High words arose, and blows were likely to follow, when Robert, Count of Meulant, with a great number of the late king’s attendants, coming in, took the part of the prince present, and forced William to leave him master of the treasure, with which they hoped, perhaps, to be rewarded for their service.’— *Carte*, vol. i. p. 480.

‘ Prince Henry was hunting with Rufus in the New Forest, when intelligence of that prince’s death was brought him; and, being sensible of the advantage attending the conjuncture, he immediately galloped to Winchester, in order to secure the royal treasure, which he knew to be a necessary implement for facilitating his designs upon the crown. He had scarcely reached the place when William de Breteuil, keeper of the treasure, arrived, and opposed himself to Henry’s pretensions. This nobleman, who had been engaged in the same party of hunting, had no sooner heard of his master’s death, than he hastened to take care of his charge; and he told the prince that this treasure, as well as the crown, belonged to his elder brother, who was now his sovereign; and that he himself, for his part, was determined, in spite of all other pretensions, to maintain his allegiance to him. But Henry, drawing his sword, threatened him with instant death if he dared to disobey him; and as others of the late king’s retinue, who came every moment to Winchester, joined the prince’s party, Breteuil was obliged to withdraw his opposition, and to acquiesce in this violence.’— *Hume*, vol. i. p. 222. 4to. 1762.

It will be understood by the reader that we produce these passages as an example, not as sufficient proof, of Hume’s use of Carte. A single incident, cannot, of course, display this so conclusively as a series of events expanded into several paragraphs, which we have not room to insert. But we believe that any one will satisfy himself of what we have said by a comparison of the two volumes in different parts. If it should be conceived that historians, relating the same events from several authorities, will naturally adopt an identical arrangement, even in the structure of their sentences, the contrary will be shown by trying the experiment upon Rapin or Lingard. It will appear, if a fair number of instances be tried, that the diversities in the order and tone of impressions made on the mind of an historian who compares and meditates upon his materials, will prevent two wholly independent writers, as soon as they leave the track of mere translation, from presenting similar narrations to the reader’s eye. In these observations we have not the slightest intention of bringing the absurd charge of plagiarism against

our philosophical historian. On the contrary, we think that having ascertained, as he undoubtedly did, the judiciousness and veracity of Carte, he acted much more fairly by his readers in keeping a valuable model before his eyes in composition, than if he had endeavoured to weave a new web of a texture which he would, perhaps, himself have felt to be inferior. It had not been the occupation of his life to investigate the early annals of England; and those who can only devote a limited time to any historical study know well the importance of a standard work to marshal and methodise their inquiries.

The unpretending and elegant, though necessarily superficial, abridgment of Goldsmith, hardly deserves notice in this place; much less an epitome of that abridgment, entitled, 'History of England, in Letters from a Nobleman to his Son,' which the booksellers' catalogues ridiculously attribute to Lord Lyttleton. Nor has Smollett in the slightest degree better pretensions than Goldsmith to authority as an historian, while he is utterly deficient in the qualities of style which belong to the latter. His continuation of Hume, nevertheless, having been generally bound up in the same series by those Mezentiuses, the booksellers, who yoke the dead to the living, and the high-bred courser to their own battered hackney, has obtained, not a reputation, but a sale which it little deserves. The history of the same period, which we hope to obtain from the pen of Sir James Mackintosh, will send Smollett to the cheesemongers. Not more than a few years had elapsed since the publication of Hume's last volumes, when Dr. Henry announced a History of Britain upon a new plan. Each volume, of which he promised twelve, was to be divided into seven chapters, for the civil and military, the ecclesiastical, the legal and constitutional, the literary history, that of arts, of commerce, and of manners, for the several periods which the entire work was to comprehend. It seems that he had contemplated its continuance to his own time; but death intercepted his progress in the sixth volume, at the death of Henry VIII. The success of Henry's history for many years after its appearance cannot be ascribed to any grace of his style, which is homely, though not absolutely bad, nor to any depth of research, for he is superficial, perhaps inevitably so, in every portion of his multifarious narrations, but to the increasing avidity for information upon arts and learning, and upon the domestic life of our ancestors, which his peculiar scheme of composition led him to display on a far greater scale than had been usual with the historian of public events. The scheme itself merits no great praise; even as an arrangement to facilitate reference, it does not supersede the necessity of an index, though he has given none; and the reader, who undertakes the perusal of the whole is distracted by continually passing from one subject to another of a totally different nature. The important accessions to our knowledge on the subjects of many chapters in Dr. Henry's history, since its publication, have diminished its usefulness; though they cannot, of course, take away from his just praise of having made much accessible which was then beyond the reach of an ordinary reader.

We shall no otherwise advert to living historians than to observe, that Mr. Sharon Turner has earned the honourable reputation of indefatigable diligence, of the love of truth and mankind, but has exposed himself more and more in each successive volume to literary criticisms, which this is not the place to point out; and that in the first volume of Sir James Mackintosh's History of England, in the

Cabinet Cyclopædia, we find enough to warrant the anticipations of the public, that a calm and luminous philosophy will diffuse itself over the long narration of our British story. But we must expect the full display of that eminent writer's powers in the ensuing volumes.

From Dr. Lingard we have perhaps suffered ourselves to be too long detained. His first three volumes were published in quarto in the year 1819; and he has now completed eight in the same form. An edition in octavo has also been published. Though we do not believe that the sale has been remarkably extensive, few modern works of the kind have obtained a more general notoriety, which has by no means been confined to our own country. A translation into French by M. Roujoux was, under the late government, used as the standard history of England in all the colleges of France. It would be unjust to suppose that the motive which will probably suggest itself was the sole cause of this preference. The merits of Dr. Lingard are of a high class. He generally discusses controverted facts with candour, (except on one subject,) acuteness, and perspicuity. He selects, in general, judiciously, arranges naturally, relates without prolixity or confusion. Abstaining from any comprehensive views of society, and from any profound remarks on human character, and thus certainly falling short of the first rank among historians, he at least avoids by this the habit of verbose declamation on these topics, which the minor Italian historians, and even Guicciardini, have practised, and of which abundant instances may be found in the writings of M. Sismondi, and, still more, of Mr. Godwin. His style, which in earlier volumes was somewhat too much constructed after that of Gibbon, has become more easy and spirited by practice; and though not free from small blemishes, nor rising into any eloquence, may be considered as good from its conciseness and perspicuity.

It is impossible to deny that the celebrity of this work has been in some measure owing to the hostility it was calculated, or perhaps designed, to excite. In the first three volumes, though Dr. Lingard was known to be a Catholic priest, little was found that provoked much controversy; nor indeed were they very much read before the publication of the fourth. It might be observed, that he disposed of the story of Edwy and Elgiva, and of the dispute between Henry II. and Becket, rather differently from most of his Protestant predecessors; but such matters have been reckoned open ground, and not very important to the Established Church. It was quite otherwise when, in descending to the Tudor dynasty, he exhibited the fathers of the Anglican reformation, and all the circumstances of that great revolution in the laws and opinions of England, so unfavourably, and yet to all appearance so dispassionately, and with so perpetual an appeal to authority, that, while many were startled to find their antient prejudices disturbed without much power of resistance, the champions of orthodox Protestantism were quick to take up the gauntlet, and expose, if they could, the misrepresentation and sophistry which was dimming the lustre of its historical glory. The time drew more than usual attention to such a contest. The great question, since so happily terminated, had begun to assume far more the character of a religious dispute, than it had done at the outset; an activity in proselytism was perceived, or strongly suspected, on both sides; and though no rational and cool-headed men were disposed to rest the merits either of Ca-

tholic Emancipation, as a political measure, or of the Reformation, as a theological one, on the personal characters of Mary and Elizabeth, of Pole and Cranmer, yet it is certain, that nothing is more common than to measure the truth of doctrines by the honesty of their professors; nor had any argument been more efficacious, in the seventeenth century, to withdraw members of the Anglican Church from its tenets, than to raise unfavourable notions of those who, in the preceding age, had established it. Even the writings of its professed friends, when tinged with the strong leaven of hierarchical principles, such as prevailed in the reigns of the two first Stuarts, tended to alienate their readers from the protestant theory of lay judgment in religion, and reform of the church by the temporal power; and thus James II. has mentioned Heylin's History of the Reformation as one of the two books which satisfied his mind, that the truth had been lost by those who seceded from the Church of Rome.

The manner of Dr. Lingard's attack on the northern heresy, as established in these kingdoms, was conducive to his success. No angry expression, no arrogance or indignation, betrays the writer's intention; a placid neutrality, and almost an affected indifference to the whole subject, seems to guide his pen: aware of the propensity of mankind, and perhaps of the greater ease of the undertaking, he prefers lowering his adversaries, to exalting his friends; and if he can degrade the memory of Cranmer, or taint the fame of Anne Boleyn, or darken a shade in the character of Elizabeth, is not comparatively solicitous to interest us for the virtues of Gardiner, or to palliate the cruelties of Bonner. Whatever, indeed, is done either way — for much is done in the way of defence, though more in that of accusation — is executed with consummate dexterity; the conclusions are always left for the reader, while the facts seem related with so much simplicity and fairness, that, when they are unfairly represented, it is not a slight acquaintance with authentic history which enables us to detect their fallaciousness.

L' arte che tutto fa, nulla si scuopre.

It was not, however, to be expected that any misrepresentations of importance would escape detection in an age when historical criticism is vigilant, and when public libraries are universally accessible. For several years Dr. Lingard's want of candour in relating the history of the English Reformation was the theme of periodical criticism, sometimes also of more extended animadversion. Many attacked him with increased animosity on account of the pending Catholic question; a few, probably, defended him chiefly on the same account. Upon the whole, perhaps, each party came off with nearly an equal number of wounds in the controversy. If, on the one hand, Dr. Lingard rendered it abundantly clear that Burnet, and those who have written the annals of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. in the same spirit, had somewhat overcharged the faults of the antient church, and considerably disguised the injustice and intolerance which accompanied its overthrow; if he was successful in vindicating the English Catholics under Elizabeth from many aspersions, and held out to just indignation the persecuting laws which so long had passed for necessary safeguards against conspiracy; it is not less certain, on the other hand, that he was convicted of frequently going beyond the meaning of the authorities which he vouches, and of still more frequent suppression of the truth.

We have the less scruple, if indeed any scruple on such a topic could be felt by critics, in alluding to the faults of Dr. Lingard in a portion of his history published some years ago, because we can bestow upon him the high and not very usual commendation, of having corrected, in a great degree, that propensity to carry a party spirit into the narrative of past times, from which writers of his profession are seldom exempt. Historical unfairness is indeed the besetting sin of the Roman Catholic advocates; and the name of Bossuet, in this respect, hardly reaches higher than that of Maimbourg. Even the soft and moderate Mr. Charles Butler, who might pass for an exception, has sometimes brought to our remembrance the malicious Greek epigram,

Λεριοι κακοι· σχ' ὁ μιν, ὅς δ' ε'
Παντες, πλην Προκληεος· και Προκληης Λεριος.

which Porson very unjustly adapted to the following epigram on a scholar little inferior to himself:—

‘ The Germans in Greek
‘ Are sadly to seek;
‘ Not five in five score,
‘ But ninety-five more;
‘ All, all except Herman,
‘ And Herman’s a German.’

But be this as it may, we sincerely congratulate our author, as well as the public, on the manifest signs of increased candour and impartiality which distinguish his three quarto volumes on the reigns of the four Stuarts in England, especially the two latter. Not that we never detect *priscae vestigia fraudis*; but the objections we could raise on this score are much less frequent. One of the most remarkable proofs of this is, that the fortunes of the Catholics, which occupied a most disproportionate share in the history of Elizabeth, those of the Puritans, though far more important in their political consequences, being reduced into small compass, and many interesting events of the Maiden Queen’s story slurred over with very slight notice, are less and less prominent as we advance, till the Popish Plot, and the designs of James II. to restore his religion, bring them naturally into the foreground.

Of the three quarto volumes to which we have alluded, the first comes down to the death of Charles I., the next to the year 1673, and the last to the Restoration. They are consequently on a sufficient scale to permit the development of facts, with their causes and circumstances, and even some degree of critical examination of them. We have found, however, that partly perhaps from some habitual indisposition to circumstantial narrative, the civil war between Charles and his Parliament is more briefly related than may be satisfactory to the general reader, considering the copiousness of materials, and the consequent accumulation of records and events; nor do we think Dr. Lingard is always full enough on the still more interesting conflicts of party within the walls of Parliament. These defects are more than compensated by a rigorous impartiality, which he uniformly displays on political questions, and which stands in singular contrast with the bias he, at one time at least, used to manifest as to the interests of his church.

COMPARATIVE STATE OF LITERATURE IN ENGLAND AND FRANCE.*

CHENIER's account of French literature since 1789 is interesting, for the very reason that it is drawn up by a person initiated in its worst mysteries. It may, in some measure, be regarded as a continuation of the *Tableau* which La Cretelle has given of the literature of the eighteenth century, in his *History of France*, during that period.

The epocha which Chenier had to discuss was a much more ungrateful season than that which La Cretelle had examined; neither has he shown the same talent in treating it; so that, upon the whole, his work is inferior, in interest and execution, to that of the historian. Being destined, however, to form a distinct treatise, the method he has adopted is preferable. Each branch of literature has its separate chapter — grammar, moral and political philosophy, eloquence, history, poetry, &c. — forming, in all, twelve heads, under which the whole subject is comprised; and we shall follow the same order in giving an account of his work.

The first chapter is upon Grammar, in which are comprised, not merely the rules of speech, but the whole art of thinking. Bacon, says M. Chenier, was the first person who made the due distinction between positive and philosophical grammar. Fifty years after him, Launcelot, directed by Arnault, one of the most celebrated among the society of the Port Royal, produced the grammar which has been the foundation of that science in France. Arnault had indeed been preceded by Robert and Henry Estienne, under Henry II., as he was followed, since the establishment of the French Academy, by Vaugelas, T. Corneille, Patru, Menage, Bouhours, and Dangeau. In the beginning of the last century, Desmarais published his *French Grammar*; and Gerard, taking advantage of an idea first started by Fenelon, his *Synonymes*. About the same time, Dumarsais published his *Treatise on Figurative Language*, which was but a part of a much larger work; some of which has been scattered in different articles in the *Encyclopedie*. At length Condillac produced the most complete work upon *Philosophical Grammar* that has ever appeared, says M. Chenier, in any country; beginning with the first generation of our ideas, by means of our senses, and thence deducing many luminous consequences. Among contemporaries, he mentions Domergue, whose speculations are just, but complicated, therefore we conceive useless in practice; and the Abbé Sicard, whose grammar, some say, is too clear, that is to say, too full of unnecessary illustrations, and thence too long. But they who make this objection do not recollect, that Sicard wrote under the strong impression of his daily task; that of stimulating into action the faculties which the privation of one powerful sense had left in a state of indolence in his afflicted pupils. A little redundancy of elucidation must rather be pleasing, when it calls to our minds a life of uninterrupted benevolence.

* 1. *Tableau Historique de l'Etat et des Progrès de la Littérature Française depuis 1789*. Par Marie-Joseph de Chenier. 1 vol. 8vo. Paris, 1816. 2. *Fragment d'un Cours de Littérature fait à l'Athénée de Paris en 1806 et 1807*, par M. J. de Chenier; Suivis d'autres Morceaux littéraires du même Auteur. 1 vol. 8vo. Paris, 1818. — Vol. xxxv. page 160. March, 1821.

M. Thurot has translated Harris's *Hermes*, and added a history of the science, since the schools of Athens and Alexandria, down to Condillac. Other modern names are Lemare, Marmontel, Garat, Rivarol, Butet, Volney. The latter speaks in favour of a universal alphabet, which might be so devised as to be applicable even to Asiatic languages. This project has at least the merit of being of more easy execution than a universal dialect; and of much more importance than a universal system of weights and measures.

In the analysis of the understanding, every thing may be traced back to Bacon; and after him comes Hobbes. Des Cartes was the founder of true logic in France; though, in metaphysics, he often erred, by deviating from his own rules; and the *Logique du Port Royal* soon followed. Malebranche pointed out the fallacy of our senses, and the illusions of our imagination, as fertile sources of error. Locke was translated; but the ideas he had refuted, though exploded in England, continued to be received in France until the middle of the last century, when Condillac published his various works, and gave general currency to the doctrines of our countryman. The *Psychologie* of Bonnet, 'l'*Esprit*' by Helvetius, were remarkable at the same epocha. In the first organization of the Institute, the Class of Moral and Political Sciences proposed the following as a prize question:—'To determine the influence of signs in acquiring ideas and knowledge; together with the influence which the improvement of signs is likely to have upon the future progress of the human mind.' The prize was won by M. de Gerando. In his *Memoire* he treats many collateral questions; among others, this very important one: Natural signs can awaken in us only sensible ideas; while all our abstract ideas must be obtained by means of artificial signs; that is to say, by language. He examines the influence of signs, and the modes by which artificial symbols may be improved, in such a manner as to compose a truly philosophic language; and adopts the opinion of Leibnitz, that the most direct method is not to invent new idioms, but more firmly to fix and know the value of old and current expressions. He is fully persuaded of their competence. To the same class M. Maine-Biran presented a *Memoire* 'on the influence of habit on the faculty of thought;' and M. Laromiguiere two *Memoires*, one on the words *Analyse des Sensations*, and another on the word *Idées*. Marmontel also published a *Logique*, vastly inferior to that of the Port Royal; and in which he declares himself a partisan of innate ideas, and bitterly reproves the *new doctors*, forgetting that, in the number, are comprised all philosophers prior to Des Cartes, and posterior to Locke: nay, even his great master, Voltaire himself, was among the scoffers of innate ideas. Yet Marmontel was one of the perpetual secretaries of the French Academy. But the writer to whom Chenier gives the palm is Mons. de Tracy. The first volume of this author is entirely given up to *ideology*. To think, to feel, being, in as far as we are interested, the same thing as to be, he explains, from that assumption, the elementary faculties of the entire man; and, after considering them, he considers their signs, written and articulated. Hence originates general grammar, which is the object of his second volume. In this, he resolves language into its first elements, and inquires what may be requisite in an idiom to make it logically perfect. To do this question justice, it is indispensable to determine what is to be understood by logic; and such is the subject of his third volume. Logic, he says, is nothing more than an exact and complete

examination of the relations which our different sensations bear to each other; and he shows the uselessness of syllogistic forms, in all such inquiries. This is the work which gives the best idea of the present state of the science in France. It is dedicated to Cabanis, a physician, and one of the first French ideologists of his time. In twelve memoirs read to the Institute, and since collected into two volumes, on the relation of the physical to the moral natures of human creatures, Cabanis discusses many bold and curious points relating to man, in the different epochas and circumstances of his life, to which he is inevitably subjected by nature. In the *Leçons des Ecoles Normales*, M. Garat exposes a variety of luminous doctrines upon our senses and upon our sensations; in which he demonstrates, 1st, that language is necessary, not merely to communicate, but to acquire ideas; and, 2d, that the first types of artificial signs, and hence of alphabetic language, were suggested by the signs which, in the human countenance, express our sensations. The hundred pages of M. Garat contain, says our author, more just and profound views than all the volumes of the old schools; and the author has practically resolved a question propounded by himself, ‘Whether philosophical language can be at once exact and eloquent?’ This science, which sprung up in England about two centuries ago was cultivated, almost exclusively, in that country, during a hundred and fifty years; but, within the last half century, it has made prodigious progress in France.

Such is the abridged account given by our author concerning the state of the art of thinking in his country. It is true that it has made great progress in France of late years. But this expression is equivocal; and if he means that the science itself has received important additions and improvements from the labours of French metaphysicians, we must differ from him. All we can allow is, that the French know more of this matter in the nineteenth than they did in the eighteenth century.

In the whole circle of human knowledge hardly any point could be found in which the English nation has had so vast a superiority over the French, and still continues to hold it, as in Mental Philosophy. The errors which Des Cartes had taught, opposed by Gassendi, but inculcated and diversified by Malebranche, continued to be prevalent in France long after the period when sounder doctrines had become common in Britain; and the existence of innate ideas was taught in that country even to the end of the eighteenth century. It is true that the opinions of our great countryman, who may be considered as the refuter of the intellectual system of Des Cartes, as Newton was the refuter of his physical errors, were known to French philosophers before that period; but they had not produced the impression which a thorough knowledge of their value must always create. ‘They are sanctioned,’ says Mr. D. Stewart, ‘in France by the authority of Fontenelle, whose mind was probably prepared for their reception by some similar discussions in the works of Gassendi. At a later period it acquired much additional celebrity from the vague and exaggerated encomiums of Voltaire; and it has since been assumed as the common basis of their respective conclusions concerning the history of the human understanding, by Condillac, Turgot, Helvetius, Diderot, D’Alembert, Condorcet, Destutt-Tracy, De Gerando, and many other writers of the highest reputation, at complete variance with each other in the general spirit of their philosophic systems.’

The mode in which the French have expatiated upon the doctrines of Locke is more nearly allied to enthusiasm than to reason, and, therefore, not of the calm and dignified nature which is grateful to philosophy. Hardly any two of his admirers in that nation interpret him alike; and the loudest in his praise are they who the least have penetrated into the true spirit of his system. Most assuredly the declamations of Voltaire are not of half so much value as the rational acquiescence of Condillac, Helvetius, Diderot, in his general sentiments; even though it was occasionally qualified by some difference of opinion and much misconception; yet the witty tragedian never gave half as many proofs as they did that he understood the theme of his raptures.

The first in France who undertook fully and clearly to expound the doctrines contained in Mr. Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, was Condillac; and for that reason he has been called, in France, the Father of Ideology. The service which this very ingenious writer rendered to his countrymen, in making them acquainted with sounder doctrines, is undoubted; but the additions which he made to the science are small. The accuracy, too, with which he exposed the system of Locke may well be questioned; and, while he flattered himself that he had made it more easily comprehensible, he had rather loaded it with new difficulties, deceiving himself by the adoption of a favourite mode of speech which he himself had created, and which in fact involves, in great apparent simplicity, much more obscurity than the original explanation of Locke; for surely no expression in the English philosopher is so metaphysically obscure as the assertion, that all the operations of the understanding are *transformed sensations*, and no principle so ill founded as that *feeling* comprehends *all* the powers of the mind. The misconceptions of Condillac, however, have been universally received and enlarged upon in France; and the explanation, which we have represented as defective, was not only implicitly adopted by Helvetius, as the grand discovery to which the Englishman owes all his glory, but we find it again pervading the later speculations of Condorcet, who says that all our ideas are compounded of sensations. One of the strongest minded of all the French philosophers of that day, Diderot, also lays down the following general law: Every expression that cannot find some sensible object, out of ourselves (*hors de nous*), to which it may be referred, is void of meaning. Finally, 'penser c'est toujours sentir, et ce n'est rien que sentir,' said M. Destutt-Tracy in 1804.

In the first reception they gave to the system of Locke, the French seemed in an extraordinary degree to overlook one great portion of his theory—that which attributes to one entire class of our ideas another origin beside direct sensation, viz. reflection. But this is quite in the mode of our too lively neighbours. The precipitancy with which any new idea runs away with them, carries them beyond all bounds; and losing sight of every other principle, they soon conceive it to be the universal agent, and exclude all past or future knowledge from existence. When the first steam-boat appeared on the Seine, serious apprehension was entertained that the breed of horses would be injured by it; and when balloons were invented, it was much lamented that men would soon have it in their power to carry armies up into the clouds, and imbue with blood new fields of air. No sooner, too, was sensation pointed out to them as a source of knowledge, and an origin of our ideas, than it absorbed their whole minds, and, with an undue spirit of generaliza-

tion, they referred the entire system of intellect to this source, without restriction. The dilatoriness which they showed in discarding the innate ideas of their countryman, has since been compensated by the unqualified extension which they gave to the new system, and which, at this hour, they maintain and are continually studying to increase, notwithstanding the revisions and modifications which the ideas of Locke are daily undergoing in the country of his birth. The French seem to have little knowledge of the intellectual philosophers of Britain posterior to Locke ; and their distance behind us, at this moment, is exactly equal to the interval which separated our present knowledge from that which we possessed when the system of innate ideas received its final refutation. To this, too, must be added the abuse they have made of the British system, and the superstructure of errors which they have accumulated upon the most controvertible portions of Mr. Locke's opinions, and to which the very first philosophers of France, Condillac, Helvetius, Diderot, Condorcet, and, more lately, Destutt-Tracy, have largely contributed. As to sound original thought and prudent discovery, they can adduce but little on any of the great points of mental philosophy ; and the knowledge of intellect is, in truth, less indebted to them for its progress than to any of the thinking nations of Europe.

Among our latest intellectual philosophers, the two who, if well known to the French, would be the most salutary to them, because most fatal to their passion for excessive speculations and immature generalization, are Dr. Reid and Mr. Stewart. The former has so admirably fixed the boundaries of those regions into which the human mind may penetrate with reasonable expectation of advantage, and shown the futility of going beyond those limits, that he might be of the greatest use in confining them to attainable inquiries, and preventing them from wandering where there is nothing to guide and nothing to convince them. The latter has so successfully explored those regions, — has shown with so much constancy, yet with so much indulgence, the abuses of licentious imagination in cultivating a field which the strictest reason only can make usefully prolific, that he might help to assure them how little the interests of truth, in the researches which mind can make respecting itself, can be promoted by fancy. The former, when he showed the verge near to which the weakness of the human understanding begins, has concentrated its real powers ; the latter, by merely lopping off the redundant errors of preceding systems, as a true lover of nature reluctantly cuts down the venerable oak of his ancestors, even while he fears it may impede the growth of the trees in which his children's children will delight, has opened many new views of intellect, and generally terminates the prospect with something exquisitely beautiful. One thing which raises Mr. Stewart above all mental philosophers, is the spirit of philanthropy which breathes in every line. He most unostentatiously, we had almost said unconsciously, discusses the powers of mind, as if he was laying a foundation for the philosophy of virtue ; and his object seems to be to acquire a knowledge of the intellect of human creatures, as the means of making them happier. This is a point of view in which no French philosopher can be compared with him, and which would have set him infinitely before M. Garat and Destutt-Tracy, even had he been less eloquent than the former, and less profound than the latter, and less exact and intelligible than both. But the labours of Dr. Reid and Mr. Stewart are sometimes of that negative kind which would rather be an annoyance to such

minds as are more pleased with the novelty than with the solidity of their speculations ; and it is not to be expected that these philosophers can at present be appreciated in France. The only French philosopher to whom we could compare Mr. Stewart for prudence and philanthropy, is he of whom Louis XVI., in his council of state, one day said, ‘ No person here loves the people, except Turgot and myself.’ Certainly, all that has been ever done in France upon mental philosophy, cannot be set in comparison with the single labours of Mr. Stewart ; yet, to the French list, Des Cartes, Condillac, D’Alembert, Diderot, Gassendi, Helvetius, Malebranche, we can still further bring the names of Bacon, Beattie, Belsham, Berkley, Cudworth, Clarke, Darwin, Harris, Hartley, Hobbes, Hume, Hutcheson, Hutton, Locke, Priestley, Reid, Shaftsbury, Smith, &c.

M. Chenier’s Second Chapter is on the Moral and Political Sciences. They are so nearly allied to those which are the theme of the preceding chapter, that no very considerable progress could be made in the one, without advancing the other ; so much do both depend upon a proper estimation of the human creature. Accordingly, we find the French again deficient in those branches of knowledge, which, from their constant application to human concerns, are more important than inquiries into the mere operations of mind. The earliest moral writer in France, says M. Chenier, is still the best, Montaigne, who, by great originality of thought and of expression, and by a powerful independence of spirit, is one of the most engaging of all essayists. Charron, with less mind, has more method ; and La Mothe le-Vayer was the boldest of all the moralists in the age of Louis XIV. The *Essais de Morale*, by Nicole, are even now held in estimation ; and the brevity of La Rochefoucault’s *Maxims* still gives them currency. But the work of the 17th century which is the most read at this day, is the *Caractères de la Bruyere*. To him succeeded Duclos ; and two ages, rivals in glory, produced on the one hand, *Telemaque* by Fenelon, and, on the other, *Emile* by J. J. Rousseau ; two works to which nothing either antient or modern can be compared. To these works Chenier adds ‘ *L’Influence des Passions sur le Bonheur des Individus et des Sociétés civiles*,’ by Mad. de Staël ; the translation of Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, and also, ‘ *Lettres sur la Sympathie*,’ by Mad. de Condorcet ; a tract by Feuillet, on this question, proposed by the Institute, ‘ *L’emulation est-elle un bon moyen d’éducation ?*’ Two tracts, under the modest name of Catechism, one by Volney, called ‘ *La Loi Naturelle, ou Catechisme du Citoyen Français*,’ and the other by St. Lambert, being a section of a greater work, ‘ *Principes des Mœurs chez toutes les Nations*.’ The Political Sciences owe their origin in France to the great Chancellor l’Hopital, worthy of a better prince than Charles IX. Dumoulin seconded the efforts of the Chancellor. Languet, under the name of Junius Brutus, wrote a Latin treatise, since translated by himself, and entitled, ‘ *De la Puissance Légitime du Prince sur le Peuple, et du Peuple sur le Prince*.’ La Boetie, the friend of Montaigne, published a ‘ *Discours de la Servitude Volontaire*.’ Badin was in some measure the forerunner of Montesquieu. The ‘ *Economies Royales*’ by Sully ; the ‘ *Memoires des Intendans de Province* ;’ the ‘ *Dîme Royale*’ by Boisguilbert, threw great light on public economy ; as did Lamoignon and d’Aguesseau upon civil legislation. Shortly after appeared Montesquieu, he whose writings will the longest continue to influence the happiness of mankind. To him

succeeds a long list of names, which we can do no more than enumerate — Rousseau, Mably, Voltaire, Servan, Dupaly, Turgot, Necker, Calonne, Mirabeau, Sieyes, Lebrun, Barbe, Marbois, Rederer, Dupont de Neucours, Garnier, Say, Merlin, Perreau, Bourguignon, Bexon, Pastoret, La Cretelle, De Bonald, Condorcet.

No language possesses a more delightful essayist than Montaigne ; and we admire him, not so much for depth of thought, as for a charm which he has spread over all his writings, even by his very defects. Full of himself, his vanity is not only excused, but even becomes seductive ; and one reads him as one listens to the confidence of a friend, whose egotism is a proof of his sincerity, and whose frankness flatters. The scepticism with which he abounds, and which, on other occasions, we should not be so ready to palliate, was, in him, a sentiment of benevolence ; for, surrounded as he was by intolerance, hearing nothing in his ears but ‘ believe or die,’ seeing no principle of action but compulsion, no argument but the scaffold or the stake, he considered it as a duty of humanity to persuade his contemporaries, that to doubt was sometimes prudent ; and that no part of opinion was sufficiently stable to authorize persecution. The general spirit of his writings seems to countenance this opinion of his intentions. Not nearly so amiable was La Rochefoucault, whose Maxims have done more, than almost any other work, to give credit to the unsocial sentiments, in which they who find it more easy to calumniate than to love their species, and indulge their wit at the expense of their heart, place their whole philosophy. La Rochefoucault had lived among the most licentious portion of his licentious countrymen ; and he generalized what might be partially correct. It cannot be said that any one of his Maxims is absolutely and universally false, or that any one of them is absolutely and universally true ; and this latitude of opinion is that which makes them dangerous. We have often thought, that a good commentary upon his principal aphorisms, drawn from a more liberal field of observation, might destroy a part of their noxious effects, and reduce them to their proper value, by pointing out the cases in which they should be rejected or received. Madame de Maintenon’s description of La Rochefoucault is so far characteristic of French manners, that we are quite certain such a jumble of opposites never could have been collected in the description of any Englishman, by one of his own fair countrywomen. La Rochefoucault, she says, was *intriguing, supple, wary* ; yet there never was a friend more *open*, more *solid*, or who gave better advice. La Bruyere was much more amiable ; and, though living very near the court, he did not draw mankind from so narrow a model. As a painter, he is lively and amusing ; but we have always thought his reputation exceeded his merit, and, above all, his originality.

It must surely give the reader a low opinion of the political sciences in France, to hear that they owe their origin to the Chancellor l’Hopital, who died in 1573. Such, however, is the fact. The Chancellor l’Hopital was an able and an upright magistrate, greater by his virtues than his talents ; intrepid in the midst of every danger, and with a soul which only the vices of his nation could overwhelm. After the murder of the Protestants, whom he had always protected, he ordered the widest doors of his castle to be thrown open to the executioners of the St. Bartholomew, who had come to assassinate him ; but he died of grief at the crimes of his country. It is not a little remarkable

that his predecessor, who had also been his friend and protector, the Chancellor Olivier, had sunk under a similar weight of sorrow but a few years before. One cannot but be struck with some individual exceptions of virtue in times of great national depravity; as with the boldness which some few writers have shown amid great national servitude. Both the one and the other are pleasing to a people that has not lost every sense of good, and that is alive at least to the glory of independence; and if such men as Olivier and l'Hopital are examples of the former, many instances of the latter may be found under some of the most tyrannical sovereigns of France. But neither they, nor the only great political writer that country ever has produced, Montesquieu, could give the nation at large political wisdom, or even make it the select study of a few, until, at the end of the last century, it suddenly occurred to them that subjects had rights, and that men were born to be free. But they have shown no great wisdom, assuredly, in the practical application of this doctrine.

We shall not enter into any very minute details upon the state of the political sciences in England, as it is a subject upon which every Briton who reads and thinks at all, must know enough to convince him of our superiority. We shall, however, bring together the names of some of the great legists of Britain, who had taught and discussed the rights and privileges of men, in general, and the means by which their countrymen had secured the enjoyment of those natural immunities to themselves and their descendants, previous to the epocha in which M. Chenier has fixed the birth of the political sciences in France. It is useless to look further back than to the Conquest; and we shall conclude with Coke, who was born twenty-three years before the death of the Chancellor l'Hopital: Bracton, named also Brito, Brooke, Coke, Fleta (or the authors of the work bearing that name), Fitzherbert, Fortescue, Hingham, Littleton, Statham, Staundforde. The reign of Elizabeth was that which began to abound with persons learned in the law; and from that period, the number has gone on increasing. Indeed, if any proof were wanting of our superiority, we need but to say, Behold both countries! 'Si monumentum quæris circumspice.' The very end and object of all political sciences is civil liberty.

Two men whom Voltaire was particularly fond of turning into ridicule, were Montesquieu and Shakespeare — and for the same reason — because he did not understand them. The greatest political writer that France has ever produced, and one of the greatest that has been known in any country, is unquestionably Montesquieu. It is said that this author, who had constantly meditated upon his subject during twenty years, gave his *Esprit des Loix* to be read by the man in France whom he considered as the best informed upon such subjects, and the most capable of pronouncing a just opinion of it; and that this friend, who, it seems, was more candid than enlightened, objected to the work in general, and particularly to some of the greatest views contained in it. 'Then,' said Montesquieu, 'I see my own age is not ripe enough to understand my work; nevertheless, I will publish it.' But not even the present age in France is ripe enough to understand him; and it is certain that, owing to the profoundness of his views, and the strength of his meditations, he is the only author of France who is generally underrated by his own countrymen. The praise which they bestow upon him has rather the appearance of what one Frenchman owes to another, in reverence to their country, than a just homage to the merit

of the individual. Two things also the French cannot pardon in Montesquieu; his having spoken well of England, and his assertion that honour is the principle of monarchy. We are inclined to do every justice to this admirable writer, who was so much above his age and nation. But it was not from his own age or nation that he learned to think. He had in presence the whole world, and all its ages past. Yet in his works may be found the marks of the time and place to which he belonged, as, indeed, the greatest mind can hardly escape such influences as those. He had no small share of the ambition which, about his time, began to infect the literary world of France; and a brilliant paradox, a dazzling epigram, enflamed him. His mind was comprehensive rather than great; for it allowed itself to be narrowed by affectation. What he had grandly seen, he often finically expressed; and the language of his thoughts bore no just measure to his conceptions. In all his writings, perhaps, not an eloquent page could be found; for he studied to avoid all ornament: yet surely eloquence is less to be avoided than quaintness; and simplicity is not his characteristic. His style has been compared to that of Tacitus; but they are alike only in brevity, which, in the Roman, was more natural than in the Frenchman. He must be excepted also from a class of men with whom he has often been confounded, the Encyclopedists, to whom, in truth, he is very unlike; for he preached not the subversion either of religion or of government, and was not envious of any thing established. It must be a very lax principle of classification, indeed, that could bring Voltaire and him under the same description, as to intention; and the very eulogium which M. Chenier makes of the former, confirms this opinion. He says, that the eighteenth century is more indebted to Voltaire for its progress, than to any other single individual. To him, more than to any other individual, the eighteenth century owes, we fear, its crimes. If, on the contrary, the French nation had studied and understood Montesquieu, they would have inquired of their own conscience and reason, before they began to demolish all the institutions of their country, whether or not they were yet capable of rational liberty; and if they had listened to the salutary negative which they must have found there, the world would have been spared from many useless crimes; and the cause of true freedom would have been more advanced by time alone, and by the progress which, in the present state of mankind, is inseparable from it, than it has been by all the outrages and precipitancy of France.

The subject which succeeds is Rhetoric and Literary Criticism. After enumerating the antient critics of France, the first things which our author notices are a Treatise on Eloquence, by the famous Abbé or Cardinal Maury; in which the pathetic unction of Fenelon, the sublime majesty of Bossuet, the religious austerity of Bourdaloue, the exquisite and varied elegance of Massillon, are duly mentioned; two others by La Cretelle, and a translation of Blair's Lectures. Of the latter he speaks in very high terms; and, as he tells us in downright honesty, because Dr. Blair has spoken very highly of the French. One of the principal points which he notices, is pulpit oratory; and says, that the English will find him sparing of his praise to their Archbishop Tillotson. We shall bring under one head the observations we have to offer on the subject of English and French eloquence in general.

In the *first* place, then, we find it impossible implicitly to agree with Mr. Hume or Dr. Blair, that eloquence has declined in modern, com-

pared with antient times. The eloquence of the two periods is certainly different; but its difference consists entirely in the means now and formerly employed, by orators, to win the consent of their auditory. Those means must, at all times, be suggested by the condition of society; which is itself dependent upon the state of intellect, and its development in the men and nations who are to be persuaded or convinced. Now, certainly the nations of antiquity were more governed by their sensations and passions, more by their feelings and less by their reason, than those which have risen to greatness and civilization in modern Europe. The entire difference in the state of past and present oratory, is owing to this single cause; for, from it, have arisen a variety of modifications in the forms of government, and consequently of debate, all of which have a tendency to diminish the influence of enthusiasm in national councils, and to bring the great concerns of men, as much as may be, within the pale of ratiocination. Impassioned eloquence, less frequently resorted to because less effective now, may have declined; but the eloquence of reason never flourished as in later nations. The most esteemed of the orations of Demosthenes, are those in which he aspired at producing a sudden and vehement impression, at inflaming the minds of multitudes, and awakening all that was generous in their natures to the defence of their country. Cicero never is so much admired, even at this day, as when he addresses himself to the passions of those he would persuade. But the orators of later times are always more esteemed when they endeavour to convince our understandings, than to captivate our feelings; and this characteristic pervades all modern eloquence, whether of the bar, the pulpit, or the senate. Many are the exclamations and tropes in the Greek and Roman models, which produced the mightiest effects upon the sensitive populace of Athens or of Rome, but which, with whatever gesture or modulation they might now be declaimed, could have no effect upon the reason of a British Parliament. But a few weeks since, a member, even of the French Chamber of Deputies, observed, that the oratorical method by which Scipio Africanus shook off a charge of peculation, would not now avail a minister of finances; and we rather think that Mr. Tierney would look a little awry at a Chancellor of the Exchequer who, in reply to his calculations, should say, ‘This day last year I won the battle of Zama or of Waterloo.’ — ‘Therefore why debate?’ Yet certainly the oratorical movement of Scipio was not deficient either in energy, in pathos, or in grandeur. If it be true that human concerns are better governed by reason than by passion, that men are in the right when they endeavour as much as possible to commit their safety to the former, and to exclude the anarchy of the latter; that the former ennobles the species, and adorns the heart, gives strength and stability to all the good which sensibility can inspire, and robs enthusiasm of all its danger; — it is not easy to conceive how eloquence can be a loser, by addressing itself to the understanding. Is it more difficult to inflame, than to convince mankind? Does a sudden burst of feeling require a greater intensity of mind, than a long chain of inductions? Has the inheritance of thought we have derived from our forefathers, been of so little advantage, that, at this late hour of the world, no better means can be used to move us, than the rude engines of ignorance, employed while men were gregarious, not social? We grant, indeed, that many oratorical resources are now excluded from discourse. But have none others of equal beauty been introduced? Has not argument

its eloquence, as well as explosion? and may it not be adorned with as many splendid illustrations? It were a paradox indeed to say, that what elevates the mind of man, debases the language in which he is addressed. We may admire the orator who can play upon human passions at his will; but we cannot so much respect the nation that allows itself to be made his sport, as that which opposes the pauser, reason, to the precipitancy of his eloquence.

The eloquence of the moderns is characterized by the actual state of the human mind; and, not only does it differ from that of the antients, but every nation has its peculiar oratory, more or less approaching to argumentative eloquence, in proportion as passion has been subdued and reason been expanded. In England, no mode of speech which could not stand the test of severe scrutiny, could long be current; and, whatever be the place where Englishmen meet to discuss, little progress can be made but by argument. Nay, so true is this, that they who would mislead them, even in their most popular assemblies, must do it by the sophistry of reason, not by passion; and the road to their feelings lies directly through their understandings. Even their errors are imbibed in logical forms; and their minds must be convinced or entangled, before they can be inflamed. In our Parliamentary discussions, the proportion of argument very far exceeds that of pathos. The discourses of Lord Chatham, even in his most impassioned moments, were founded upon argument, which, indeed, he often enforced with vehemence and warm feeling; and, roused as he was to indignation, at the idea of the British employing Indian tomahawks, or at the perverted use a Peer proposed to make of the means which God and nature had put into their hands against their American brethren, he gave scope to passion; but it was not till he had long laboured to convince the Senate, by reasoning, of their impolitic conduct towards America, that, in a midnight debate, he implored their Lordships not to rob the Americans of the last hope of obtaining their rights, at that dark and silent hour, when honest men were in their beds, and thieves alone were waking for their prey. The same thing, even in a greater degree, may be said of the orators who adorned the close of the last century; and what confirms our general opinion is, that the eloquence of the great speakers who were born in Britain, was more argumentative than the eloquence of Irish orators.

The eloquence of the Bar in France was, and is, nearly null. It appeared upon some very rare occasions, and but feebly; but was not habitual. In England, pathos is little used in pleading, and still less in courts of positive law than of equity; and in every case when too warm addresses are made to the feelings of a Jury, the Judge not unfrequently cautions them against the seductions of impassioned eloquence. In antient Egypt and in Greece the pleadings of the Bar were written.

The eloquence of the Pulpit is that in which the French have the most excelled. The Church was indeed the only field there open to oratorical talents; and the Catholic religion, more imaginative than the Protestant, allows greater scope to imagery and pathos; while the latter is more richly stocked with argument and reason.

In proportion as a subject is solemn and sacred, the English conceive, that in treating it, passion should be excluded; and religion is so powerful and majestic in itself, that it needs only to be explained to the understanding of rational beings, to be appreciated. In fact, the

pulpit is not the proper place for impassioned eloquence ; which, if it guides us well to-day, may equally mislead us to-morrow : while all the sophistry of false reasoning never can pervert us so widely, or so dangerously. It is not because English preachers read their sermons that their style is tame : but it is because the object of Protestant preachers is to be calm, and argumentative, that, in this country, an appearance of extempore delivery is avoided. Arguments which come recommended by the sedateness of meditated composition, are more forcible upon the understanding than sudden suggestions ; but half the energy of passion is derived from its freshness. Among the pulpit orators of France, Saurin, a Protestant, is distinguished for his gravity. In a word, the entire difference between the oratory of England and France may be thus stated ; — the eloquence of the English is ratiocinative, argumentative, demonstrative ; the eloquence of the French is imaginative, declamatory, impassioned. The former excel in the senate and at the bar, because they have long been free ; the latter are more brilliant in the pulpit, because, as Catholics, they can indulge in oratorical forms, the frequent use of which is denied to British divines, by the moderation of Protestantism. These differences are to be accounted for, like all other national differences, not by a disparity of talent, but by a diversity of character, which acts as a check or as a stimulus to the growth of every faculty.

The two next chapters are upon History ; the first real, the second fictitious. Three things, says our author, are necessary to an historian — talent, love of truth, and liberty ; *all* of which, he adds, were wanting in most of the persons contained in the long list of French historians. At first, indeed, the deeds of France were recorded in chronicles written by monks, and in Latin. Joinville and Froissart were among the earliest who wrote in French ; and their *naïveté* still pleases. Philip de Comines painted, in sombre colours, the Court of the dissembling Louis XI. Seyssell was not an adequate historian of Louis XII. Brantome was a mere compiler of anecdotes ; he is, however, very amusing. Sully, Perefixe, are interesting, because their hero is so, Henry IV. It is much to be regretted that De Thou did not write in French. Then came Mezeray, sometimes too familiar, sometimes almost eloquent ; superior to Daniel, and even to Velly and his two continuers. Bossuet needs no eulogium. St. Real, the alleged rival of Sallust, was not always correct. He who, by his vivacity and variety, came the nearest to the historian of Catiline, was the Cardinal de Retz, in his *Memoires*. Then came Vertot, the Père d'Orléans, the Abbé du Bos, and Rollin, the most elegant and easy of all ; but whose history is too much reduced to the level of youthful understandings. The *Abrégé Chronologique* of Hainault is also well conceived. Two men of genius flourished about that time, Montesquieu and Voltaire. The history of Louis XI., by the former, is lost : but the latter, says M. Chenier, is the founder of a sect which has since spread itself over England, where public spirit and liberty are favourable to the labours of the historian. Condillac was weak in this branch of literature ; but Mably is indispensable to every person who would study the progress of the French government. To this list he adds Gaillard, Reynal, Rulhières, and all the translators of the times. One of these we must notice. Mons. Leveque, the translator of Thucydides, published a Roman History, the object of which was to depreciate all the republican heroes of that nation, in favour of despotism ; and by order of

Bonaparte, or at least under his special protection. We cannot pretend to enumerate every person mentioned and descanted upon by M. Chenier; but two of them we must speak of. One of these is Anquetil. His History of France is, perhaps, that which, on account of its moderate length and other qualities, is the most likely to be popular. It is written with little talent — chiefly according to Velly, from whom whole pages are often transcribed. In his younger days, he had acquired some reputation by two historical works, ‘*l’Esprit de la Ligue*,’ and ‘*l’Intrigue du Cabinet*.’ The other is Fantin des Odoards, a continuer of the continuers of Velly, and author of a miserable voluminous work, which he calls ‘*Histoire Philosophique de la Révolution*,’ and who is remarkable for the reciprocity of abuse with which he and M. Chenier bespatter each other. Rulhières on Russia, and again on Poland, is among the first modern historians of France. Thouret is a useful abridger of Mably. Royau has lately published a shorter History of France than Anquetil’s, and which may vie with it in popularity. He appears to have the merit of impartiality.

As is the history of any country, so must be its historians. Petty facts can never furnish matter for bold delineation; and, where an entire nation is great, they who record its actions cannot escape the general contagion; they have greatness thrust upon them. Now, with the exceptions of a few particular instances and qualities, the history of the French nation does not partake in the character of moral greatness, which is profusely found in the records of Greek and Roman transactions. The French have chiefly excelled in war; and mere war, without internal policy, without political wisdom, may afford a brilliant, but not a pleasing, not an instructive page to those who study mankind in all its varied shapes. To their ability in the art of war, the French have joined considerable glory in literature, in the fine arts, and much ingenuity; but hardly any of those things which denote or constitute dignity of intellect, or energy of character, or vast and comprehensive capacities; in short, they are deficient in most of the features which the large pencil of history would paint as exalted. In vain would any Robertson, or Hume, or Gibbon attempt to delineate the annals of France, as greatly as he would those of Britain. The portrait would be without features; and the whole image would be reduced to legs and arms.

A species of historical writing in which the French excel, is Memoirs. Anecdotic information — stories relating to individuals — are particularly suited to their minds; and even vanity is not misplaced in such light and flippant productions. The list of memoirs written by persons who were actors in most of the scenes they recount, is prodigious; and as the French possess great quickness of observation, and much liveliness, their personal narratives are more animated and interesting than those of any other nation; particularly to readers who are not shocked at embellishments. In this species of portrait-painting the French excel; but they cannot combine a vast historical group of actions, motives, and events.

It is from a similar difficulty of combining grand effects, that the French have remained inferior to the English in fictitious history. Dr. Blair is not of this opinion; for he finds himself forced to confess that they are our superiors. It would be difficult to say, upon what grounds the Professor founded this general decision; and even M. Chenier cannot coincide in it. To us it appears, that the romance and

novel writing of the two countries bears the stamp of their respective characters; and that the French may be superior to us in sketching the manners of the elegant and trifling world, or the little flutterings of fancy, which they mistake for the heart: the intrigues of very depraved and very refined society, or the gallantry and heroism of chivalry. But in painting true and general nature — in delineating great features of mind, and strong emotions of the soul — they cannot be compared to us, because they have but an imperfect original of these things before their eyes. Possibly Dr. Blair preferred the former style of representing men; and, though we are of a different way of thinking, we will not dispute his taste.

The oldest monuments of French literature are romances, and even metrical romances. The first of these was composed under the reign of Louis the Young, to which succeeded *Tristan du Leonois*, the romance of the *Table Ronde*, and the *Twelve Peers of France*. Italian and Spanish romances were known in the sixteenth century, in which magicians and fairies were the chief agents. Gerard de Nevers, and Petit Jean de Saintre, are among the most amusing productions of the reign of Charles VII.; and, in our own time, they have been written in modern language by Tressan. The *Cent Nouvelles de la Cour de la Bourgogne*, and the *Hectameron* of the Queen of Navarre, sister of Francis I., were happy imitations of Boccaccio. In the time of Anne of Austria, Spanish literature began to influence the literature of France; but this, again, was soon modified by the Fronde. Malherbe, Racan, Corneille, Balzac, Voiture, contributed to refine the manners, by improving the language of their country; and the Romances of Calprenede and Mademoiselle de Scuderi portrayed the mixture of gallantry, heroism, and *bel esprit*, then prevalent; but all their personages taken from antiquity, wore the modern French dress. The *Roman Comique* of Scarron exposed the follies of its day; and, though grotesque, it is still read. The *Memoires de Grammont* are eminently amusing; but the *Princesse de Cleves*, by Madame de la Fayette, was the best of all the novels that had yet appeared in France. The epocha during which the great poets of France flourished, was little fertile in Romance; and it was at an era posterior to them, that Le Sage published *Gil Blas*; that the Abbé Prevost wrote his *Cleveland*, his *Dean of Killereen*, and, above all, his *Manon Lescaut*, and translated the works of Richardson. The *Lettres Persannes*, by Montesquieu, may be considered as fictitious history, and one of the most philosophic in existence. With more hilarity, and less strength, Voltaire, in his old age, produced *Zadig*, *Micromegas*, the *Huron*, *Candide*. At length the *Nouvelle Heloise* was published; a novel unrivalled in eloquence, though inferior to *Clarissa* and *Grandison* in characters. In the second line of merit stands Marivaux, with *Mesdames de Tencin*, de Graffigny, and Riccobini; Duclos, Crebillon, Marmontel; and, finally, two novels, which we do not hesitate to say are among the most infamous productions of wit, the *Liaisons Dangereuses* by Laclos, and *Faublas* by Louvet.

A novel, which some years since was much spoken of, was *Atala*, by the Vicomte de Chateaubriant. The subject, conduct, and language of it are, to our apprehension, quite ludicrous and insane. The heroine on her deathbed, for instance, confesses to a priest, that often she has wished the Divinity were annihilated, provided that, locked in the arms of Chactas, she might roll from abyss to abyss with the ruins of God

and of the world. Where could we find British prose so mad as this? Yet we have lately seen Monsieur de Chateaubriant called in print the greatest writer of his age.

The most prolific of the female novel writers of France, is Madame de Genlis. We wish we could say she was equally respectable and correct. Madame Cotin had the power of interesting to a great degree, and was particularly remarkable for true pathos. But the most meritorious of all was Madame de Staël, who, with greater defects, possessed talents of a higher order than any female author we could quote in France. But her's were the defects of genius. Pigault Le Brun is amusing, prolific, but frequently unfit for youthful ears. Numerous translations, too, principally from the English, may be reckoned among the additions to this branch of French literature. A person whom we must notice is Fievée, author of the *Dot de Suzette*, and *Frederic*. He is now turned political writer, and, as such, stands prominent. Another is the celebrated M. Benjamin Constant, who has found time, from his politics, to be the author of a poor novel called '*Adolphe*.'

In the whole list of French novelists, we could not find any that can vie with Richardson, in the details which he gives of all his personages, and, so to say, the comprehensive minuteness with which he presents them to our intimate knowledge, in their most familiar moments, and stamps upon them the strongest features of individuality:—with Fielding, for the true painting of his characters, whether by comic or pathetic touches, his humour, and his tenderness, as in *Amelia*; the variety and the probability of his incidents; the involution and the evolution of his plots, as in *Tom Jones*; and the interest we feel in the fate of those of whom we cannot quite approve, yet whose failings and whose virtues we recognise as forming a mixture eminently human:—with Smollet, for the coarse and peculiar spirit with which he represents the humours of his *dramatis personæ*, and the aptitude with which they are brought together:—in short, with any of our great novelists, in the true delineation of men, who, though fictitious, are represented in such vivid colours, and are so like their existing prototypes, that we almost credit their reality. It is not the single novel of *Gil Blas* which could suffice to found a national competition. The merit of this very delightful performance, notwithstanding some admirable touches of nature, does not so much consist in faithful portraiture, as in amusing incidents and situations, and in the lively simple mode in which the tale is related. As to Marivaux, there is always too much straining and subtilization in his writings; and he is without the easy flow of true talent. If we look to novels of an inferior order, those which boarding-school misses and sentimental lieutenants most admire, and in which they recognise their own first loves, the French come somewhat nearer to us; but such productions are even further removed from *Grandison* and *Amelia*, than *Reynolds* and *Morton* are from *Ben Jonson* and *Congreve*. In painting the passions of a drawing-room, the frettings of a boudoir, the anxieties of coquetry, the turmoils which persecute silk gowns and embroidered vests, as well as in the extravagance of *Clelia* and *Cleopatra*, we may yield to the French; but not in the delineation of nature, such as belongs to every heart not narrowed by drilling, and circumscribed by rule.

We will here bid adieu to M. Chenier. The first six chapters of his work are upon prose; the six which follow are upon poetry; conse-

quently we may pause between the two ; particularly as we shall soon have an opportunity, we believe, of returning to the latter subject.

The period which M. Chenier has undertaken to examine, comprises about twenty-five years, passed in revolution and in war. All that, under the old government of France, could be supposed to impede the progress of genius, had been removed ; and a new era, replete with hope and promise, was unfolding itself to those who dared boldly to aspire. Every avenue was open ; and this age offered one facility more than that of Louis XIV. to those who would acquire fame, even crime was scarcely amenable to law or to opinion. It is true, that they who reached celebrity were quickly removed from the active scene, to make room for others ; and devouring factions, soon to be devoured, destroyed each other, not yearly, not monthly, but weekly, for the amusement of the many-headed Garagantua, who applauded each successive fall, and panted for another. The germination of persons, worthy of such a glorious end, must then have been rapid beyond example ; yet, among those whom our author, the contemporary, the colleague, the accomplice of their renown, has quoted, we were quite astonished to find so few whose memories, whether embalmed by their vices or their talents, are likely to be preserved to very distant years. In half a century, for instance, where shall we find the names of Andrieux, Anquetil, Arnault, Baour-Lormian, Barbe-Marbois, Barré, Bexon, Bitaupe, Boissjolin, Boissy d'Anglas, Bonald, Bouilli, Bourguignon, Brugnières, Butet, Cambaceres, Castel, Chanlaire, Chenedollé, Clement, Cournand, Daunon, Delrieu, Desodoards, Domergue, Duc de Plaisance, Dupuis, Dupont de Nemour, Dureau de la Malle, Esmenard, Feuillet, Français de Nantes, Français de Neufchateau, Frenilly, Ganilh, Garat, Garnier, Gaston, Gerbier, Gudin, Guillard, Henry, Hofman, Jouÿ, Lalane, Larcher, Laromiguiere, Laujon, Laya, Lemare, Lemer cier, two Leveques, Luce de Lanceval, Maine Biran, Marsollier, Merlin, Michaud, Millevoie, Monvel, Morel de Vindé, Morellet, Murville, Naigean, Palissot, Pastoret, Perceval de Grandmaison, Perrault, Piis, Pons de Verdun, Portalis, Raux, Raynouard, Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely, Renandés, Ribouté, Rivarol, Rœderer, Rayer, Say, two Segurs, Sieyes, Simeon, Soulavie, Suard, St. Ange, Thouret, Thurot, Tissot, Trielhard, Trouchet, Victorin-Tabre, — and about as many more, which we suppress in pity to our readers ? ‘ They had no poet, and they died ! ’ — for we suspect even M. Chenier will not immortalize them ; and we have little doubt that the very ablest of those Revolutionary worthies would find in this country, and at this moment, at the least ten persons of more ability than himself, yet whose names are absolutely unknown.

We confess ourselves to belong to the sect which maintains that the quantity of improveable genius in the world is much more equal, in all nations and at all periods, than it appears to be from the contemplation of different countries and epochas ; and that it is the wants, the passions, the demands of society, which call it variously into action. Whenever a greater number of poets fill the scene, it is more because the world is ripe and eager for poetry, than because the *genus irritabile* has been particularly parturient. In the same manner, when occasion calls for statesmen, statesmen arise ; when the blast of war blows in our ears, warriors flock to camps and armies ; when philosophy comes into request, philosophers start into notice. Some strong exceptions to this rule may seem to discredit it ; and we grant that, in whatever condition of things they had come into the world, Homer would have been the

poet of heroes, and Shakespeare of men. But it is not the less true that the spirit of the times may always be known from the bent which genius takes in them. Genius, to use a very drudging illustration of our meaning, is the raw material, which afterwards takes its fashion from the taste of the market; and it must wholly depend upon the fancy of the consumer whether it is to be compressed into stout warm covering against inclemencies, or twisted into the fine spun threads of open laces and embroidery. Now, nothing better than M. Chenier's Tableau can do us the service of informing us fairly, and without party prejudice, but on the broad principles of human nature, what has been the predominant spirit of France since the year 1789. If liberty was the ruling passion, then the appendages to liberty must have flourished; if conquest, then the arts of war must have superseded all others; if despotism, then all the implements and artifices and force which despotism employs to forge its chains, must have been the study of the rulers.

The most remarkable branch of intellectual improvement, at the commencement of the Revolution, was Eloquence. The sudden expansion which senatorial oratory, new in France, acquired at that moment, might have been a prognostic of rising liberty, had it been of a more sober complexion. But it consisted all in passion, in fury against past subjection, or in no less virulent answers to angry attacks. It was admirably proper to excite the populace to frenzy, to arm them for destruction, to make them even forget that, when all was demolished, something must be reconstructed. Not only the walls of the antient city fell before its blast: their very elements were crushed to atoms, so that only dust remained; and of this every tempest bore away its part. Barnave, and all the orators of that party, but particularly Mirabeau, who was roused by seventeen *lettres de cachets* directed against him, and most of which his stormy soul had richly earned, if any thing could earn them, — were the enthusiasts of visionary freedom, which neither they could systematise for their countrymen, nor their countrymen receive from them. In the factions which succeeded, and when the rage which had inspired the first Constituents had accomplished all its purposes, public speaking declined. Under Robespierre, under Bonaparte, silence was safety, and remonstrance death. After a lapse of five-and-twenty years, and since it has been decreed that to speak should be no longer dangerous, there has been no revival of any thing like oratory. It would, indeed, be difficult to devise a mode of debating, if so it can be called, more directly in opposition to eloquence of every kind, than that which the French Chambers have adopted, — the alternate reading of essays for and against each question, from a pulpit; yet, considering their past experience, we are convinced that they have shown their wisdom in that precautionary regulation.

To the Moral and Intellectual Sciences, those which, by studying man in all his forms, particularly lead to sound policy, good government, and liberty, we have seen how little attention has been paid, and how little progress has been made in them, as well as in the political sciences themselves. On a former occasion we showed the deceitful use to which the physical and mathematical sciences, as well as the fine arts, have been sometimes applied, and that none ever prostituted them to the debasing ends of despotism so insidiously and so triumphantly as Bonaparte. Yet even in the physical and mathematical sciences the epocha which followed the Revolution cannot be com-

pared with that which immediately preceded it, either for the learned men or for the discoveries which it produced. The majority of persons who were celebrated in chemistry, in mathematics, during the Revolution, nay, many of those who are renowned even at this moment, had made themselves conspicuous before the Bastille had fallen, and their labours had promised them their full share of immortality before the Assembly of Notables had met. Let us look into the list of the Institute as it stands at this moment, 1820, after thirty murderous years have been thinning its ranks of many antient academicians, once the boast of France, and examine what is the proportion of members who were distinguished before the Revolution, compared with those whom the Revolution has educated, and who can stand in any thing like a similar rank of literary or scientific consideration. To this list let us add the men who have died within the last thirty years, and who, conspicuous before the Revolution, continued still to honour it with their talents; and, as a balance to the scientific glory of that period, let us deduct the names of those whom it has, in some shape or other, disastrously, disgracefully, and criminally swept away — Condorcet, Lavoisier, Malesherbes, &c. — and we shall find that the men whom Europe has been admiring were the pupils of other times; and that those times of admiration are far from having produced their mite of persons eminent in science or in letters. To particularize individuals would be an invidious task; but we have examined those lists with care, and, to about thirty-six members of the Institute, celebrated before the Revolution, the last thirty-two years have not added more than about a dozen who are worthy to be their successors.

To whatever side we turn our view, even to the fine arts, we shall find evidence of the same assertion; and that the only science or art which made a real progress, and absorbed the attention of the entire nation, is War, with all its implements. In no department or occupation have so many persons won celebrity, as in the trade of arms; and in none has the nation been half so successful. Indeed, the proportion which this bears to all others is so vast that one cannot help pronouncing, the very instant it occurs to the mind, that war — licentious, not necessary war — war, not for defence, but conquest — has been the ruling spirit of the French nation for the last thirty years. Defence could never have required such armies, such arsenals; but unlimited conquest needs unlimited means.

With what satisfaction, with what gratitude to the Supreme Disposer of human empires, must not every Briton look back to the same era in his own country, and think upon the progress which mind has made there, in all its departments, during the same period! And now let party spirit — let despondency — let all the causes which have so often prevented and which still prevent the British nation from doing justice to herself, and have constantly injured her in the estimation of foreigners, be forgotten, while we enumerate some of the establishments, discoveries, philosophers, poets, statesmen, orators — some of the things which have raised our island to the summit, not of fame merely, but of worth — which have conferred upon the empire a dignity that, great as it was, it never knew before, and held up to the world a beacon of civilization, which, honoured by the praise of the great and the envy of the impotent, long will be the aim and limit of aspiring nations. It is not our intention, neither is it in our power, to do justice to every individual and to every discovery or establishment; and, should involuntary

omissions occur, we trust the injured will excuse us, as our object is to present to our readers in one view, and merely as a sketch, without respect of persons, the mass of British intellect which may be considered as contemporary with that which M. Chenier has celebrated in the work before us.

We shall begin with that branch in which the French appear to have been the most successful — War. By sea and land, then, we have had — Abercromby, Anglesea, Achmuty, Baird, Beresford, Bridport, Brisbane, Collingwood, Congreve, Cornwallis, Duckworth, Duncan, Exmouth, Hill, Hood, Hoste, Howe, Hutcheson, Lake, Lynedock, Moore, Murray, Nelson, Pack, Pakenham, Picton, Rodney, Saumarez, Schrapnell, Sidney Smith, Strachan, St. Vincent, Wellington, Wilson, Wood. As orators in the senate, bar, and pulpit — Alison, Blair, Brougham, Hussey Burgh, Canning, Chalmers, Courtenay, Curran, Dundas, Ellenborough, Erskine, Flood, Fox, Grattan, Grenville, Horne, Horner, Horseley, Hurd, Jones (of Nayland), Kenyon, Mansfield, M'Intosh, Milner, Paley, Peel, Pitt, Plunket, Porteus, Romilly, Scott, Sheridan, Thurlow, Tomline, Venn, Watson, Wellesley, Whitbread, Wilberforce, Windham. In history, philosophy, politics, belles-lettres, we have had — Adolphus, Alison, Belsham, Bentham, Blair, Bowdler, Brown, Burney, Colquhoun, Cox, Currie, B. Edwards, Ferguson, Gibbon, Gillies, Gilpin, Hallam, Howard (the philanthropist), Jones, Knight, Malthus, Mill, Millar, Miller, Mitford, Paley, Parr, Porson, Price, Reid, Rannell, Robertson, Roscoe, Smith, D. Stewart, Horne Tooke, Wilkins. In science, — Allan, Allen, Arnold, Arkwright, Baillie, Bancroft, Banks, Beddoes, Black, Blagden, Brande, Brewster, Brinkley, Brown, Cavendish, Cruikshanks, Cullen, Dalton, Darwin, Davy, Earnshaw, Mrs. Fulhame, Gregory, Hall, Hatchett, Henry, Home, Hope, Howard, Hunter, Hutton, Jameson, Kirwan, Kennedy, Leslie, Macartney, M'Culloch, Maskeline, Murray, Nicholson, Nimmo, Pepys, Playfair, Priestley, Ramsden, Rennel, Rennie, Robison, Rumford, Rutherford, Shaw, Smeaton, Smith, Tennant, Thompson, Thornton, Telford, Troughton, Watt, Willis, Wollaston, Young, A. Young. Artists — Bacon, Beechy, Bird, Bone, Chantry, Copley, Flaxman, Gainsborough, Harlowe, Heaphy, Heath, Hopner, Lawrence, Linwood, Lowrie, Nollekens, Northcote, Rayburn, Reynolds, West, Wilkie. Poets — Beattie, Byron, Bowles, Boyd, Campbell, Carey (translator of Danté), Coleridge, Colman, Cornwall, Cowper, Crabbe, Darwin, Hookham Frere, Gifford, Haley, Heber, Herbert, Hunt, Keats, Lloyd, Mathias, Millman, Montgomery, Moore, Philips, Rogers, Scott, Smith, Sotheby, Southey, Wolcot, Kirke-White, Wilson, Wordsworth. Dramatists — Burgoine, two Colmans, Cumberland, Holcroft, Home, Kelly, Murphy, Sheridan. The French have on their list many persons of inferior talents to Okeefe, Reynolds, Morton, &c. Poets wholly untaught by any master except nature, a thing unknown in France, and which we shall take a future opportunity of discussing — Bloomfield, Burns, Chatterton, Clare, Dermody, Hogg, Anne Yearsley. Novel writers — Barret, Cumberland, Godwin, Holcroft, Lewis, and, in himself a host such as France could not collect from all her past and present stores, Sir Walter Scott. Travellers — Anderson, Barrow, Bruce, Clarke, Dodwell, Hanway, Holland, Kirkpatric, Leake, Legh, Malcolm, M'Kenzie, Morier, Neale, Parke, Ritchie, Swinburne, Weld. Female writers, a rich theme, to which we propose returning at some future period — Aikin, Austin, Baillie, Barbauld, Bowdler, Brooke, Brunton, Burney, Campbell, Carter, Edgeworth, Grant, Hamilton;

Hawkins, Holford, Jackson, Inchbald, Lea, M'Cawley, Marcet, Montague, More, Opie, Owenson, Piozzi, Porter, Plumtree, Radcliffe, Roche, Seward, Sheridan, Charlotte Smith, Elizabeth Smith, Taylor, Tighe, Trimmer, West, Wolstoncroft.

To our religious and moral establishments existing before this period, we have added — The Naval and Military Bible Society, 1780; British Society for the Encouragement of Servants, 1792; Society for the Conversion of Negro Slaves, 1795; Missionary Society for Propagating the Gospel in Heathen and Unenlightened Countries, 1795; Religious Tract Society, 1799; Society for the Suppression of Vice, 1802; British and Foreign Bible Society, 1804, of which 500 Auxiliary and Branch Societies have been formed; Society for the Publication of Select Religious Tracts, 1804; London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, 1809; Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline, and the Reformation of Juvenile Offenders, 1819; Church Missionary Society for Promoting the Building of Churches and Chapels; The Endeavour Society, for Promoting the Principles of the Established Church, by forming a Library of Orthodox Divinity, the Distribution of Books, and the occasional Relief of Indigence. To our charitable and benevolent establishments, our hospitals, infirmaries, &c. before existing, we have added — The Finsbury Dispensary, 1780; Eastern Dispensary, 1782; Public Dispensary, 1782; Mary-le-bone Dispensary, 1785; Central Dispensary, 1786; City Dispensary, 1788; Society for the Relief of Widows and Orphans of Medical Men in London, 1788; Free Masons' Charity, 1788; Western Dispensary, 1789; Literary Fund, 1790; Naval Charitable Society, 1791; London Maritime Institution for decayed Master Mariners and their Families, 1791; Universal Medical Institution, 1792; Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, 1792; Electrical Dispensary, 1793; Sea-Bathing Infirmary at Margate, 1794; The Endeavour and Benevolent Lying-in Society, for attending Poor Women at their own Habitations, with the Loan of Childbed Linen, Medicines, &c., as also for the Vaccination of the Children, and the Cure of their Diseases until seven years of age, 1794; Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor, 1796; Commercial Travellers' Society, 1800; Institution for the Cure and Prevention of Contagious Fevers, 1801; New Lying-in Charity, for the Wives of Foot-Guards, 1801; Society of British Banking and Commercial Clerks for the Relief of Old Age, Widowhood, &c., 1802; Friendly Female Society for Relieving Poor and Distressed Women who have seen better days, under the Management of Ladies, 1802; Patriotic Fund, 1803; Mile-End Philanthropic Society, for the Discharge of Persons Imprisoned for Small Debts, 1803; Royal Infirmary for Diseases of the Eye, 1804; London Infirmary for Ditto, 1805; Society of Friends of Foreigners in Distress, 1807; Charitable Fund for Relieving the Sick Poor, at their own Habitations, with Medicine and Pecuniary Aid, 1808; London Female Penitentiary, 1808; Infirmary for Diseases of the Lungs, 1810; Northern Dispensary, 1816; Clerkenwell General Philanthropic Society, 1813; The Highland Society, instituted in 1770, incorporated in 1816; Westminster Infirmary, 1816; Infirmary for Diseases of the Spine, 1816; Universal Dispensary, 1816; Royal Dispensary for Diseases of the Ear, 1816; Society for the Benefit of Widows of Officers of the Medical Department of the Army, 1816; West London Infirmary and Lying-in Hospital, 1817; African and Asiatic Society, for the Relief and Instruction of the Natives of Africa and Asia resident

in England; Surrey Dispensary; Bloomsbury Dispensary; Original Vaccine Institution; National Vaccine Institution; London Vaccine Institution; The Benevolent Institution for Delivering Poor Married Women at their own Habitations; Central Lying-in Charity; Benevolent Society of St. Patrick; Society of Schoolmasters; Choral Fund; Artists' General Benevolent Institution; Morden College, Blackheath, for Decayed Merchants; Refuge for the Destitute; Society for Improving the Condition of Chimney-sweepers. Astonishing as this List may appear, we must observe, that the greatest and most valuable part of our Existing Medical Charities, had been established previously to the year 1780. The following are among our hospitals — Bayswater Lying-in Hospital; City of London Hospital; Queen's Hospital; Bethlehem Hospital; Christ's Hospital; Foundling Hospital; Greenwich Hospital; Chelsea Hospital; Jews' Hospital; Magdalen Hospital; St. Bartholomew's Hospital; St. Luke's Hospital; St. Thomas's Hospital; Scotch Hospital; British Hospital; General Hospital; Westminster Hospital; Emanuel Hospital; French Protestant Hospital; Guy's Hospital; London Hospital; Middlesex Hospital; St. George's Hospital; St. Mary-le-bone Hospital; Small-pox Hospital.

We must also mention, alimentary provision to the King and Royal Family of France, to the French Clergy, Nobility and Royalists of every description, continued until their return to France, and amounting to nearly six millions Sterling, in about twenty years, beside establishments for educating their children, dispensaries, &c. In addition to this, we annex an abstract of such of the incidental public charities as we recollect in London only, and during the year 1819 only.

	£	s.	d.
British and Foreign Bible Society - - -	93,336	6	0
Church Missionary Society - - -	30,076	0	0
London Missionary Society - - -	25,409	0	0
Society for the Conversion of the Jews -	8,955	12	0
Prayer-book and Homily Society - - -	1,987	14	0
Hibernian Society - - -	4,683	0	0
Naval and Military Bible Society - - -	2,162	0	0
Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge -	33,700	0	0
Methodist Missionary Society - - -	2,400	0	0
Moravian Missions - - -	5,000	0	0
Baptist Missions - - -	16,000	0	0
Society for Propagating the Gospel - - -	13,800	0	0
National Society for Education - - -	2,500	0	0
Religious Tract Society - - -	6,180	0	0
Collection on the King's Letter for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel - - -	50,000	0	0

Sum total, three hundred and seventeen thousand four hundred and eighty-one pounds.

The additions to our establishments for education have been — Society for the Support of Sunday Schools throughout the British dominions, 1785; Philological Society for the Education of the Sons of Clergymen, Naval and Military Officers, Professional Men, Merchants, Manufacturers, Clerks in Public Offices, the higher Order of Tradesmen, and other gentlemen who, from misfortunes or limited incomes, cannot afford a liberal education to their children, 1792; Westminster New Charity School, for Clothing and Educating Fifty Male and Fifty Female Children, 1796; School for the Indigent Blind, 1799; Royal

Military College, Berks, 1799; Hibernian Society for Promoting Schools in Ireland, 1800; East India College, Hertford, 1805; City of London School of Instruction and Industry, 1806; African Institution, 1807; National Society for the Education of the Poor, 1811; The Corporation of the Caledonian Asylum, for Supporting and Educating the Children of Indigent Scotch Parents residing in London, 1815; The Adult Orphan Society, 1819; Dr. Bray's Institution for Parochial and Lending Libraries; British and Foreign School Society; Welch Charity School; Philanthropic Society; The Insolvent Debtor's Friend, for Educating the Children of Insolvent Debtors.—Our establishments and discoveries relating to letters, science, arts, manufactures, during this time, have been — British Society for Extending the Fisheries and Improving the Seacoasts, 1786; Linnæan Society, 1788; Royal Society of Musicians, 1790; Board of Agriculture, 1793; Royal College of Surgeons, 1800; Royal Institution, 1800; Committee for the Inspection of National Monuments, 1802; Society for Painters in Oil Colours, 1804; Medical and Chirurgical Society, 1805; British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts, 1805; London Institution, 1805; Surrey Institution, 1808; Russel Institution, 1808; Philosophical Society of London, 1810; Geological Society, 1813.—Vaccination, if not discovered, at least applied to relieve the human species from one of the most dreadful diseases to which it is exposed.—Various improvements in education, to an immense extent, according to the methods devised by Bell, Lancaster, and others, and which have been introduced from this country into almost every nation of the globe.—Improvements in the steam-engine, and its infinite applications to the highest uses, as well as to promote the hourly convenience of every class of society, and most especially of the poor. By means of this instrument, one of the most powerful which human ingenuity has yet put into the hands of man, which is of British conception, growth, and completion, its immortal author has new-modelled the industry, not merely of his own country, but given the means of unexpected comforts to the whole civilized species, and a new impulse to the human mind.—Application of burning gas to public and domestic purposes, on the most extensive scale; Welch china, the clay of which is inferior to none in whiteness; Ironstone china, in imitation of Indian, and which can with difficulty be broken; Lifeboat; Life-preserver; Congreve Rockets; Shrapnell Shot; Improvements in Boring Cannon; Improvements in Manufacturing Gunpowder; Wernerian Society; Horticultural Society; Bible Societies; Missionary Societies; Society of Engravers; Westminster Library; Panoramas; Camera Lucida by Dr. Wollaston; Discovery of three New Metals in the Ore of Platina, by Dr. Wollaston and Mr. Tennant.—By means of the galvanic battery, greatly improved and modified in England, Sir Humphry Davy operated the decomposition of at least twenty substances, earths, alkalis, acids, &c. before thought simple; and, by introducing a great number of new agencies into the chemical science, subverted a large portion of the theory unjustly attributed to Lavoisier. The Atomic Theory of Chemical Combination fully demonstrated by experiment and calculation.—The improvements made by Sir William Herschell in Optics, and his subsequent discoveries in Astronomy; a new planet, the Georgium Sidus, with its satellites; a long list of new stars, nebulæ, double and triple stars, changing stars, motion in the stars hitherto supposed fixed; translation of our solar system, through infinite space, towards a spot in the hea-

vens occupied by the constellation Hercules, as confirmed by forty-four observations out of fifty-six; his discoveries upon light and heat, &c.

Such is a part, and indeed it could hardly be expected we should give more than a part, of the advantages which the British empire has been adding to its former stock since the year 1780. We shall not discuss their merits, lest we should be induced to expatiate too largely. We must, however, observe, *1st*, That we have confined ourselves principally to the metropolis, in our enumeration of charitable, religious, moral, and intellectual establishments. But the metropolis contains about one-eighteenth of the entire population of the British islands: hence we shall be within bounds when we say, that such establishments there do not form one-sixth of all those which are diffused over these islands, not reckoning those which we have spread over our most distant possessions; for London, though bearing a greater ratio of population to England than Paris does to France, is far from bearing the same overweening ascendancy in every other respect. *2d*, That as great a portion of our benevolence is addressed to foreigners and to foreign nations, as to our own subjects; and this without the hope of profit or return. *3d*, That it has rarely fallen to the lot of a nation to make so large an addition to so large a previous stock of good, in so short a time, and under such circumstances. *4th*, That this vast development of national bounty and intellect, so honourable to the British heart and head and hand, has taken place while we were engaged in the most expensive war that ever has been waged; while we were struggling to protect European civilization from the military despotism of France, and to deliver France herself from that same despotism, of which she did not feel the disgrace or the disaster until it was harassed and disabled by defeat. *5th*, That if we have undergone some sufferings, and been afflicted with some calamities; if a precious portion of our countrymen has been reduced to want, or goaded on to intemperance and insubordination, we have minds to bear with dignity our own distresses, and hearts to relieve those of others, and virtues to oppose the wild spirit of disorganization; that, with all our real ills, and all our fancied grievances, we have yet less to deplore from the effects of foreign levy or domestic strife, than any of the nations which were drawn along with us into the same vortex of contention; that, issuing from the severest trial to which a nation could be put, we have not only preserved our wonted energy, and good faith and wisdom, but that the struggle has added new matter to our moral resources; and that, while we pay the debt of suffering which human creatures owe, our debt of gratitude is still more vast and sacred, when we reflect, that now, more perhaps than ever, our country is the first among nations. How long it may remain so, is in the hands of inscrutable Providence; but the day on which it ceases to guide the public opinion of Europe, will be a day of bitterness for the whole human species, and most of all for the nations which most desire our ruin. Happy, if we ourselves never shrink from the high post of duty which this pre-eminence imposes upon us, or permit the sordid calculations of Despots to prevail over the generous maxims of British Liberty. *

* See a masterly article *On the Comparative Skill and Industry of France and England* contributed to the E. Review by the distinguished author of this Essay, Vol. xxxii. page 340; and one on the *Comparative State of Science in the two Countries*, Vol. xxxiv. page 383.

THE LITERATURE OF THE MIDDLE AGES.*

AMONG the various revolutions which literature has experienced, none are more remarkable than those which it underwent in the period included in the work before us. The high and dazzling prosperity of the Augustan age; the rapid and deep decline of the succeeding times; the long period of ignorance and barbarity which ensued; and the commencement of a new state of things, destined to no retrogression, present a spectacle interesting to every imagination, and a series of phenomena of which the causes and effects may justly be ranked among the most interesting subjects of philosophical investigation.

The causes by which literature is promoted, are so nearly the same with those by which human happiness is advanced, that one cannot be surprised at the deep interest which mankind have taken in tracing its progress through the different stages of society. It is in fact regarded, and with justice, as the most infallible criterion of the point of civilization at which any people have arrived.

It is not however so much, perhaps, to its intimate connexion with the general happiness of society, as to its connexion with the happiness of individuals, that literature is principally indebted for the favour which it has enjoyed. As the manners of men are refined, and the taste for the coarse or boisterous enjoyments of the barbarian declines, no amusement is found to occupy so delightfully the vacant hours of life, even to those whose principal pursuit is amusement. No pleasure is so little subject to wear itself out, by exhausting either the materials or the faculty of enjoyment. It is one of those tastes which grow by indulgence; of which the objects become more numerous, and the emotions more exquisite, the greater the cultivation which it receives. It is more independent of the will of other men; more independent, in point of all external circumstances, than almost any other source of enjoyment. The objects about which it is conversant, too, fill the mind with a consciousness of its own elevation; while it traces the innumerable events which are passed, or pierces through the veil that covers the future; ranges over the globe upon which it is placed, or flies from planet to planet, and world to world, through the regions of infinite space. The indulgence of a literary taste is naturally attended with a perception of increasing power — of a more enlarged dominion over the objects of nature, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational. It is attended with the delightful conviction of giving a higher claim upon the love and esteem of mankind, and of acquiring a greater command over those feelings and passions which render men odious to their fellow-creatures. How naturally it combines with the best feelings incident to every condition of life—with what advantages it engages and employs the thoughts of the wretched, tempers and moderates the elevation of the prosperous, directs the enthusiasm of the young, and relieves the ennui of the old, has been so long felt, and so often expressed with all the powers of language and of genius, that it may well be regarded as one of the laws to which universal assent is attached. ‘If the riches of both Indies,’ said the elegant and amiable Fenelon; ‘if the crowns

* Berington's Literature of the Middle Ages.—Vol. xxiii. page 229. April, 1814.

‘ of all the kingdoms of Europe were laid at my feet, in exchange for my love of reading, I would spurn them all.’

In surveying the extended field which Mr. Berington presents to our view, it is of importance to set out with an accurate estimate of the original standard by which all that follows is to be measured. Literature, to whatever perfection it was carried in the Augustan age, in the branches on which culture was bestowed, must be allowed to have possessed but a narrow, and by no means a very elevated range. The departments of Roman literature were in number hardly more than three; poetry, history, and rhetoric. In regard to philosophy at least, their pretensions, we think, cannot be ranked very high. Of physical science they were altogether destitute. And of their most celebrated writings or what they dignified with the name of Moral Philosophy—those, for example, of Cicero—besides that they were only transfusions from the Greek, we should hardly, in the present day allow that they were of the nature of science or philosophy at all. Though moral precepts are enforced with persuasive elegance, and practical questions of morals discussed in our Spectators and Ramblers, we are not accustomed to rank these popular productions among our works of philosophy. But, unless where he enters upon the trite and puerile questions,—whether the *summum bonum* consists in pleasure, or in the absence of pain,—whether it consists in virtue along with riches and pleasure, or in virtue alone;—or where he undertakes to prove that all opinions are doubtful, and that, with regard to the human mind, there is no such thing as truth or falsehood, frivolities which still less deserve the name of philosophy, and are of kin to those with which the human mind is uniformly caught in the infancy of civilization,—the writings of Cicero certainly ought not to be considered as of a higher cast than the serious papers in the Spectator, or the moral sermons of Blair.

If we carry our criticism even higher, to the masters of the Romans in literature—the Greeks, we shall find that their legitimate pretensions lie within a very limited compass. In Geometry, one of the branches of mathematical science, they had, indeed, made a noble and astonishing progress; but, into the properties of physical bodies, or the order of physical events, they had hardly pushed their inquiries beyond the obvious results of vulgar observation. In regard to the Philosophy of Mind, the writings of Xenophon, and even those of Plato, exquisite models as they are of the arts of disputation, and instructive beyond example in all the resources of attack and defence—are by no means entitled to rank higher than the works of Cicero. Among all the philosophers of antiquity, Aristotle alone appears to have made any considerable attempts in what we now should think worthy to be called the philosophy of mind. But even he appears not to have conceived the scheme of collecting and arranging the phenomena of thought, and ascertaining the order of their succession. His Logic is undoubtedly an attempt—astonishing for the powers which it displays, and instructive by the lights which it communicated—to analyze the process of general reasoning, one of the complicated operations of the mind; the nature of which, after all, he entirely mistook. It is indeed a remark, which is worthy of mention, that not one of the antient philosophers had any conception of the real nature of general terms, or of the operation of mind, which is called Abstraction;—and that it is chiefly by this radical defect that they are perpetually perplexed, and led into all their trifling and absurdity. The Metaphysics of Aristotle, are either

an effort to explain the various uses which were made of the most general terms of the language, without an attempt to explain their real nature, or to penetrate into what is placed beyond the reach of human faculties, the essence and causes of things. His Ethics are a sort of manual of practical morality, to explain and enforce the four cardinal virtues. His Politics are an attempt, and an attempt which exhibits the vigour of his genius, to explain some of the most striking phenomena of government, which had been exhibited among the states of Greece, or the neighbouring countries. But to penetrate to the general principles of government,—to show the powers which it implies,—the mode in which they are formed, and in which they operate,—the ends at which they aim,—the causes of their aberration, and what is necessary to keep them true to those ends ;—these are inquiries, to which it is evident that his mind had never expanded itself. The feebleness of his general speculations is indeed so remarkable, that the most wretched pamphleteer of the present day would be ashamed of the trifling and absurd remarks of which the greater part of his treatise is composed. It is however melancholy to relate, that this treatise, destitute as it must be of any instruction to men of the present age,—is the only work on the science of politics, which the most opulent and powerful of our seminaries of education thinks proper to teach.

It thus sufficiently appears, that in the most useful branches of literature, the Romans had made no progress at all, and the Greeks very little. That the chief object of poetry is to delight and amuse, we suppose will be allowed ; and we know, that some of its most exquisite specimens have been produced when intelligence and civilization were at a very low ebb. When Horace therefore pronounces Homer a more instructive teacher of moral and political wisdom than Chrysippus and Crantor, the condemnation of the philosophers, we dare say, is just enough ; but for the *instruction* to be derived from the poet, we must be permitted to think that it is infinitely inferior to that which may be gained from the fables of Esop.

With regard even to historical composition, it is worthy of remark, that notwithstanding the exquisite perfection to which, in one of its branches, the antients carried this art, a perfection to which the moderns, perhaps, have never attained, it is yet the meanest of its branches, if useful knowledge be the measure of esteem. In the hands of the antients, history is only the art of weaving an exquisite narrative out of the common and vulgar recollections of events. From the profound research of materials, they were no doubt debarred, because events in those days left, in writing at least, but few traces of themselves behind. But the antient historians appear to have had little or no conception of the dependence of the events which they related upon the most remarkable of their causes, upon the state of government, and the state of society, among the people to whom the events related. To learn that one people made war upon another, and that a number of incidents of such and such a description ensued, is a tale, how frequently soever repeated, of which the instruction is soon exhausted. To make appear, in relating the transactions of nations, in what they were guided towards their real interest, and in what they were led astray from it ; what were the chief circumstances by which they were deceived in regard to their true interest, and suffered from their mistakes ; what the circumstances which most contributed to give them a perception of their real interests, and to protect them from those delusions which

would have plunged them in misery, is the only means of rendering history a school of experience; is the only register of the past, which is pregnant with instruction for the future.

As for oratory, the only remaining branch of Roman literature, it was rather an instrument for the performance of certain kinds of public business, than either calculated or designed for the promotion of knowledge. It cannot, therefore, be set down as a branch of literature to which the human mind is much indebted. That it is an instrument of which the tendency is to do good, rather than evil, we should upon the whole allow. It is not, however, by diffusing knowledge, nor by strengthening the mind, that its beneficial effects are produced. Considered merely as a branch of literature, not as an organ of power, it seems not to stand upon any higher level than poetry. With whatever delight, then, we may have perused,—and who has not perused with delight?—the poetry, history, and oratory of the Augustan age, it is nevertheless obvious, that it was only in the entertaining branches of literature, and not at all in the useful and instructive, that the Romans (and the same thing nearly may be said of the Greeks) had made any extraordinary progress.

From the time of Augustus, it is universally allowed that literature, among the Romans, degenerated and declined. The causes of this, present an object of inquiry to which great attention has been called, and from which the most important practical conclusions may be deduced. The great change which had taken place in the condition of the Romans, was the loss of liberty; and although their rude and ill-constructed republic was a most imperfect instrument of government, the difference in the state of the human mind, under a free and a despotic constitution, was prodigious. It is one of the most decisive experiments which has ever been made upon human nature; and upon the circumstances on which its degradation or its excellence really depend. The disadvantages under which the Romans laboured, from the defective construction of their republican government, nourished in them many vices, and retarded their progress in improvement. But the despotism to which they afterwards submitted, speedily eradicated from their minds every amiable and respectable quality, and reduced them to almost the lowest, and most disgusting, condition of human nature. Without this great experiment it might have been deemed impossible, that a people who had once attained a high degree of civilization, could, without any external calamity, and merely by the vices of their government, sink back to a condition in many respects inferior to that of the barbarian; a condition which, had it been described to us without any intimation of their former state, we should have regarded as one of the first removes from the savage life; displaying the ignorance, the falsehood, the sordid misery of the savage, without his manliness and constancy. The most instructive circumstance by far in the history of the Greeks and Romans, and one of the most instructive which the annals of the human race present, is the contrast exhibited between the qualities which they displayed under an ill-regulated liberty, and the qualities engendered in them by despotism.

Few words will here be sufficient for describing the decline and fall of literature under the horrid system of misrule to which the Roman world became subject, after the loss of the republican government. According to the natural order of things, the astonishing success which had attended the literary efforts of the Augustan writers, ought to

have excited the flame of ambition, and multiplied the candidates for fame. But the calamities of the times, calamities produced by the government alone, repressed the generous impulse; and notwithstanding the improved state of education, and the taste for reading and for literary pursuits which the Augustan age must have produced, the succeeding generations passed away with little addition to the stores of literature. The satires of Juvenal, and the historical writings of Tacitus, are perhaps the only productions which display any vigour of genius, or of thought, subsequent to the age of Horace and Livy. A sort of mental torpor seems to have come upon the human race; every motive for exertion died away; and men took refuge in stupidity and indifference from the evils of the oppression which they had not manliness to shake off.

It is curious enough, that even poetry, that seems more ready to flourish under unfavourable circumstances than any other branch of literature, gradually disappeared under the second barbarity of Roman despotism, and left nothing behind excepting some chronicles, for the most part contemptible, of passing events.

It will occur to every body, that there was however another, and a very copious set of writings, we mean, those on theological subjects. But we entertain some serious doubts whether we ought to class them under the head of literature at all. With many persons indeed it is a question, whether Christianity was not one of the causes of the corruption and decay of literature. From this opinion we unequivocally dissent; but it is an opinion held by very orthodox Christians; and the reverend Mr. Berington, we find, does not hesitate to give it, in some measure, the sanction of his authority.

‘The sons of Constantine,’ he observes, ‘though two of them had their stations in the west, were still solicitous to repair the injury which the removal of the seat of empire had occasioned; and when, after some years, Constantine became sole master, so engaged was he with the necessary defence of his widely extended dominions, or so absorbed in the Arian controversy, which then distracted the Christian world, that classical literature in vain implored his fostering care. Besides, at this time, the systems of Grecian philosophy had gained so many admirers among the converts to Christianity, and, by their alluring theories had so far succeeded in perplexing its simpler truths, that men of the brightest abilities eagerly engaged in the new pursuits; and that harmonious and manly language, which the sages, the poets, and orators of Greece had spoken, was alienated to the purposes of sophistic disputation.’

Though we shall presently state the considerations which incline us to form a different opinion, we cannot help allowing, that circumstances present themselves in abundance, which may appear on a superficial view, to give a colour to this proposition. Nothing, certainly, can be conceived more wretched, than the lying stories of miracles, the fabulous lives of pretended saints, the degrading conceptions of the Divine Being, and the endless disputes about the most contemptible questions, with which the writings of the early Christians are almost universally filled. Dr. Middleton, accordingly, in the outset of his *Free Inquiry*, observes,

‘In order to free the minds of men from an inveterate imposture, which, through a long succession of ages, has disgraced the religion of the gospel, and tyrannized over the reason and sense of the

‘ Christian world, I have shown, by many indisputable facts, that the
 ‘ antient fathers, by whose authority that delusion was originally im-
 ‘ posed, and has ever since been supported, were extremely credulous
 ‘ and superstitious; possessed with strong prejudices, and enthusiastic
 ‘ zeal, in favour not only of Christianity in general, but of every par-
 ‘ ticular doctrine which a wild imagination could engraft upon it;
 ‘ and scrupling no art or means by which they might propagate the
 ‘ same principles: in short, that they were of a character from which
 ‘ nothing could be expected that was candid and impartial; nothing
 ‘ but what a weak or crafty understanding could supply, towards
 ‘ confirming those prejudices with which they happened to be pos-
 ‘ sessed; especially where religion was the subject, which, above all
 ‘ other motives, strengthens every bias, and inflames every passion of
 ‘ the human mind. And that this was actually the case, I have
 ‘ shown also by many instances; in which we find them roundly affirm-
 ‘ ing as true, things evidently false and fictitious; in order to strengthen,
 ‘ as they fancied, the evidences of the gospel, or to serve a present turn
 ‘ of confuting an adversary, or of enforcing a particular point which
 ‘ they were labouring to establish.’

To the same effect, Dr. Whitby, speaking of Papius, and Irenæus, those of the Christian writers who were the nearest to the days of the Apostles, says,—‘ It is very remarkable, that these two earliest writers
 ‘ of the second century, who, on the credit of idle reports, and uncer-
 ‘ tain fame, have delivered to us, things said to be done by the Apostles
 ‘ and their scholars, have shamefully imposed upon us, by the forgery
 ‘ of fables, and false stories.’

Of the credulity of those wretched times, and the facility with which any delusion might be imposed upon the people, for which their leaders had occasion, a proof may be taken from what St. Augustin relates, upon the testimony, he says, of credible persons, ‘ that at Ephesus,
 ‘ where St. John the Apostle lay buried, he was not believed to be
 ‘ dead, but to be sleeping only in the grave, which he had provided for
 ‘ himself, till our Lord’s second coming; in proof of which they
 ‘ affirmed, that the earth under which he lay, was seen to heave up and
 ‘ down perpetually, in conformity to the motion of his body in the act
 ‘ of breathing.’

When the taste for fabulous legends was somewhat exhausted, that of subtle disputation succeeded. Whether, of the divine beings concerned in the scheme of redemption, the Father alone was God, and the Son and the Holy Ghost only secondary, though exalted beings;—whether the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, were three equal, coeternal, and separate beings, concordant in will;—whether they were three beings, coincident in nature, and separate only in the forms or aspects under which that undivided nature was pleased to manifest itself—which are the distinguishing opinions of the Arian, Tritheistic, and Sabellian sects;—or whether the Trinity included three distinct persons, but consisting of one substance, and constituting but one God, which the Council of Nice ultimately adopted as the orthodox creed,—were questions that engendered disputes which had no end; which engaged the attention and the passions of men to a degree at which we now stand amazed; and which appear to have extinguished the taste and the regard for every other species of mental exertion.

The contests which regarded the Trinity, were succeeded by those of the Incarnation. Whether Christ was purely God, and his corporeal

appearance a mere illusion ;—whether the divine nature was one thing, namely, the Eternal God ; and the human nature another thing, namely, a real man, though the best and wisest of the human race ;—whether the Godhead was united and mingled with the body of a man,—the divine Logos, supplying, in the person of Jesus, the place and office of a human soul ;—or whether perfect God was in the second person of the Trinity substantially, and indissolubly united with a perfect man ;—whether it was pious or impious to denominate the Virgin Mary the mother of God ;—whether Christ was of one nature, or two natures ;—whether he had one will, or two wills. These disputes, and the different shades by which they approached or receded from one another, occupied not only the pens of the writers, but the sword of the magistrate ; and men sought with greediness each other's lives in the violent pursuit of these unavailing controversies.

Whether images should be worshipped or broken, occupied in fierce disputes the eighth and ninth centuries, and finally separated the Western from the Eastern Church ; while monks and relics occupied all the attention which controversy left disengaged.

Such is the unfavourable aspect on a first or hasty review under which the operation of Christianity upon the state of literature presents itself. Upon a full inspection, however, it will be seen, that the corruption of Christianity, of which we thus complain, was itself the effect of that vitiated state of the human mind, of which the vices of the government were the great and primary cause. It was only in a weak and perverted state of the human mind, that those opinions and practices which we now contemplate with disgust, could have been either engendered or approved. And Christianity purged them off, exactly in proportion as mankind threw off their chains, and the human mind acquired liberty and strength. Christianity has not prevented the modern nations of Europe, wherever the government attained any tolerable goodness, from making progress in science. But where the government was utterly bad, as in Spain for example, there Christianity has retained its pernicious form, and literature its barbarity. It is because the government of Spain has degraded the human mind, that its religion retains its deformity. Had the government been ameliorated, religion would have improved. Had the purest religion been introduced while the government continued bad, it would have speedily acquired a similar degree of corruption.

The irruption of the northern nations, induced a new feature upon the barbarity of the Roman world. Whether it deepened the gloom which already overshadowed the human mind, is a question perhaps not very easy to be answered. That a large proportion of the antient inhabitants suffered, and very severely, can hardly be doubted ; though not much more, it is probable, than the inhabitants of some countries are often made to suffer under the ravages of modern wars. But it does admit of very serious dispute, whether the human mind was in a worse situation among the Goths, or among the Greeks and the Romans. If the latter retained, perhaps as relics, some of the trappings or exterior ornaments of a higher state of civilization, all the essential ingredients had long been lost. The virtues, both intellectual and moral, were extinct : no strength, no activity of mind, no curiosity, no ingenuity, had been known for ages. Sloth and cowardice, and falsehood and venality, with squalid poverty on the one hand, and tasteless profusion on the other, completed the picture of the times. The Goths were uncouth

in their dress, and not very delicate in their food ; but they had already begun to cultivate letters, and with the eagerness of a people to whom they were new. Their minds had as yet been little subject to discipline ; but they had not been deadened by slavery : they were full of curiosity, full of activity, vigorous, and persevering. They either brought with them, or they speedily imbibed, a taste for literary pursuits ; and, though it has been often adduced as a proof of the barbarity of the times, that even the upper ranks themselves could not universally read, it is to be observed, that among the Greeks and Romans, in their most cultivated state, it is probable that this talent was not very generally diffused ; and before the art of printing, it is certain that its diffusion could not be very wide.

We cannot, it is true, adopt, without considerable limitations, the character of the invaders which in the sixth century Jornandes, the bishop of Ravenna, has left ; whose statement our author thus abridges.

‘ They surpassed the Romans in figure, and in bravery. They had among them, even at the time of their early migrations, men of extraordinary erudition, who were their masters in the schools of wisdom. Hence, the Goths were esteemed more learned than other barbarous nations, and *almost* comparable with the Greeks. He proceeds to describe their devotion to the god Mars — whom they propitiated by human victims ; their further advances in civilization, and their skill in music. He observes, that about the time of Sylla and of Julius Cæsar, the Goths, whom the latter could not conquer, were wholly guided by the advice of the sage Diceneus. Sensible of their docile disposition, and their natural talents, there was no part of philosophy which he withheld from them. He instructed them in ethics, in order to civilize their manners ; in the laws of nature, to show them that these laws were to be observed ; and he taught them logic, which rendered them more expert than other nations in the art of reasoning. He proposed to their contemplation the theory of the twelve zodiacal signs, the revolutions of the planets, and the whole science of astronomy, which shows the increase and wane of the moon, and how much the fiery globe of the sun exceeds the earth in magnitude. With what pleasure then, says he, when the repose of a few days allowed a respite from arms, did these brave men turn their thoughts to philosophy ! You might observe one scrutinizing the face of the heavens ; another exploring the nature of herbs and fruits ; a third calculating the uses of the moon ; and a fourth pursuing the labours of the sun in its diurnal course. By these, and many other lessons, the fame of Diceneus had become so great, that all orders of men, and even the chiefs obeyed him. Comiscus, his successor, and not his inferior in wisdom, was held in almost equal veneration. He became the king, and highpriest of the Gothic people, whom he ruled in justice.’

If we believe that the Gothic monk praises the people too highly to whom he belonged, it may even from this panegyric be inferred, that the horrid pictures which terror and abhorrence dictated to the pens of the alarmed and distracted Greeks and Romans, from whose accounts our notions of them have commonly been derived, were at least as highly exaggerated on the opposite side. All the turbulence and distraction incident to the rudest form of the feudal government, which ensured a state of society bordering upon a perpetual civil war, were less injurious to intellectual vigour than centuries of calm, unruffled

despotism ; and it was not long before a new species of literature began to arise,—a new species of poetry,—a new species of physics,—and a new species of metaphysics.

Under the head of poetry, we do not propose to speak of the leonine verses, which had nothing in them of poetry but the jingle. We shall pass over several generations to the appearance of the *Trouveurs* and *Troubadours* in the thirteenth century. The remarkable circumstance in their history, is the order of its commencement ; not till many years had been zealously spent in the new physical and metaphysical labours. For this, however, it is not difficult to account. The vernacular language, since the change which it had undergone by the admixture of the conquering nations, had not been the written language ; and, it would appear, that poetry can never really thrive in any but the vernacular language. The general rule was so far observed, that the first specimens of literature in the modern languages of Europe, were the poems of the *Trouveurs* and the *Troubadours*. It is unnecessary to describe what is so generally known, as the species of life by which these itinerant minstrels were distinguished. The nature of their poetry is all we are here called upon to illustrate. Tales of heroism, ludicrous and satirical tales, and tales of war, without any objection to episodes of indecency, were the common subjects of the poems to which at present we advert. As the exploits and the manners of chivalry constituted the grand subjects of admiration to the age, it follows of course, that the feats and the loves of the knights, composed both the lofty and the tender themes for the muse of the minstrels. For the subject of their merriment, they took a wider range. But the manners of the monks, the priests, and the physicians, form the principal topics of their ridicule. It is surprising to what a height they carry the severity of their satire against the clerical body ; and it either proves the great forbearance and good nature of the priesthood of those days, or the high delight which the men who were powerful enough to yield protection, took in listening to the ridicule of the priests.

Much inequality pervades the rude poems to which these observations relate. But, amid many prosaic and contemptible passages, fine bursts of sentiment occasionally break forth ; and sublime, as well as tender emotions, are very powerfully produced. Their influence upon the progress of mind seems to have been salutary, and far from weak. By presenting something to delight in the vernacular tongue, the taste for reading was diffused ; and the consciousness of exercising so flattering a power over a growing multitude of readers, increased the motive to improve the language, as well as to render it the vehicle of more important ideas. The astonishing perfection which, at this early period, and almost in its first attempts, the Italian poetry attained, in the hands of Dante and Petrarch, is one of the most remarkable circumstances of those obscure times. The character of this poetry is too generally known to require any description ; and its superior refinement may in part be accounted for, by considering that the circumstances which made Rome the capital of the Christian world, made Italy the centre of all the little improvement which was then known.

The degree to which the study of physics was carried in the period under our review, is by no means unworthy of consideration. Its origin and the motive to it, were worthy, indeed, of the darkest periods of human history : but the pursuit itself, was attended with great advantages. The studies to which we allude, it will readily be under-

stood, were those of the alchemists, originally pursued for the discovery of the *elixir* of life, and the philosopher's stone. The absurdity of the end, of necessity, occasioned a great misapplication of the industry which was bestowed; but the greatness of the motive, excited industry to the highest degree; and, of the innumerable experiments which were made, an important discovery was from time to time the result. At the same time that alchemy introduced in Europe one great branch of physical science, astrology kept alive the attention to another. By the opinion which prevailed, and prevailed to a late period, (for it was habitual with many of the most eminent persons in the court of Charles the Second,) that the positions of the heavenly bodies were prophetic of terrestrial events, men were powerfully excited to observe and to record the phenomena of the heavens; and the noble science of Astronomy arose in this manner out of the most absurd of superstitions. It is not, we suspect, sufficiently considered, to how great a degree we are indebted for that spirit of discovery in the physical sciences, which burst forth so wonderfully after the discovery of printing, to the ardour of the alchemistical and astrological studies of the antecedent times. It is not even considered how many of our most important inventions those times and those studies produced. If we mention only those of glass and of gunpowder, we shall convey no trivial idea to those who are unacquainted with the details.

But it is now necessary to advert to what constituted the most important branch of the literary pursuits of the ages under our review, their Logic and Metaphysics. As this, however, is a subject which much care has been employed to illustrate, and with which most persons who read, are to a certain degree acquainted, it will be less necessary for us to dwell long in the discussion. It is surprising, not only how much ardour, but how much talent was wasted upon the art of syllogizing, and of playing tricks with abstract and general terms. One remark may be considered of some importance; — that the passion for verbal subtleties and refinements, is one of the characteristics of a low stage of improvement, and will be found to have perverted the application of most nations in the infancy of their literary pursuits. The first speculators in Greece, for example, were the sophists, whose art consisted in puzzling and surprising their hearers, by the tricks of a quibbling dialectic; and the great merit of Socrates, and after him of Plato, consisted in exposing the folly of that verbal jugglery, and introducing a taste somewhat less irrational, into moral speculation. Among the Persians, the Hindus, and, generally speaking, all the lettered nations of Asia, the business of moral speculation never ascended beyond this inferior level; and their endless and mischievous distinctions in grammar (for they hardly get the length of logic) have been set down by superficial inquirers, as a proof of great civilization, and a high state of mental improvement.

In considering the intricate and useless disquisitions into which the scholastic disputants were led by the obscurity of abstract, general terms, it is of great importance to observe, that they were the first to start a question, to which, in no former age, philosophy had been sufficiently improved to give birth. They originated the grand inquiry — What is the *nature* of abstract or general terms? — A question, upon the right understanding of which, more, perhaps, than on any other question whatsoever, the progress of the human mind depends. The disputes of the nominalists and realists, though not very wisely conducted,

and of course not leading, in their hands, to any very definite results, pointed distinctly at the real difficulty; and led the way to that knowledge of the true character and use of general terms, which alone can explain the nature of general reasoning, and preserve the mind from those illusions which the abuse of general terms is so apt to impose upon it.

The most important light, however, in which the scholastic studies are to be viewed, is that of the influence which they had in laying the foundation of the modern institutions of education; and the influence which, by their means, they continue to exert upon the existing generation. Before the prevalence of the scholastic ardour, the state of the schools is by our author thus described.

‘The subjects taught in the schools, were comprised under the general heads of *Trivium* and *Quadrivium*,—words which are sufficiently indicative of their barbarous origin. *Trivium* included, what were deemed the introductory and less noble arts — Grammar, Dialectics, and Rhetoric: *Quadrivium* closed the circle by Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astronomy. The following lines served to fix them in the memory.

Gramm. loquitur, *Dia.* vera docet, *Rhet.* verba colorat :
Mus. canit, *Ar.* numerat, *Geo.* ponderat, *Ast.* colit astra.

‘Why the place of honour was rather given to the latter, than to the numbers of the *Trivium*, does not distinctly appear. But whatever may have been its temporary ascendant, Logic, or rather the scholastic art of disputation, was afterwards pursued with so much ardour, that it absorbed all its sister arts, and triumphed over the circle of the *Quadrivium*.’

It became in fact the leading object of education; and all other parts of tuition were regarded as only paving the way to this noble attainment. New institutions were erected, for the purpose of training up youth in this popular science;—institutions which were regarded, as crowning the work of education. ‘Never,’ says Roger Bacon, speaking of his own times, ‘never was there such a show of wisdom, such exercises in all branches, and in all kingdoms, as within these forty years. Teachers are everywhere dispersed, in cities, in castles, and in villages, taken particularly from the new monastic orders.’ In fact, these new orders, whose activity was whetted by a desire to distinguish themselves, and who took up the ground of education, as left unoccupied by their predecessors, contributed not a little to diffuse the ardour for study, and to obtain the foundation of schools and colleges, for the advancement of their favourite science. Most of the universities and colleges, for the higher branches of education, throughout Europe, owe their origin to those times, and to the passion for those studies. To the scholastic logic, after the fall of Constantinople, was added the study of the antient Latin and Greek; and at that point, in most of the institutions of education in Europe, especially where unhappily they became united with a rich ecclesiastical establishment, the business of improvement stopt.

THE RELIGIOUS AND LITERARY MERITS OF THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH.*

WE had thought that the merits of the Fathers were beginning to be pretty fairly estimated; — that, whatever reverence might still be due to those eminent men, for the sanctity of their lives, their laborious lucubrations, their zeal and intrepidity in the cause of the Church, and all those solemn and imposing lights, in which their nearness to the rising sun of Christianity places them; — yet, that the time of their authority over conscience and opinion was gone by; that they were no longer to be regarded as guides either in faith or in morals; and that we should be quite within the pale of orthodoxy in saying that, though admirable martyrs and saints, they were, after all, but indifferent Christians. In point of style, too, we had supposed that criticism was no longer dazzled by their sanctity; that few would now agree with the learned jesuit, Garasse, that a chapter of St. Augustine on the Trinity is worth all the Odes of Pindar; — that, in short, they had taken their due rank among those affected and rhetorical writers, who flourished in the decline of antient literature, and were now, like many worthy authors we could mention, very much respected and never read.

We had supposed all this; but we find we were mistaken. An eminent dignitary of the Church of England has lately shown that, in his opinion at least, these veterans are by no means invalidated in the warfare of theology; for he has brought more than seventy volumes of them into the field against the Calvinists:—And here is Mr. Boyd, a gentleman of much Greek, who assures us that the Homilies of St. Chrysostom, the Orations of St. Gregory Nazianzen, and — *proh pudor!* — the Amours of Daphnis and Chloe, are models of eloquence, atticism, and fine writing.

Mr. Boyd has certainly chosen the safer, as well as pleasanter path, through the neglected field of learning; for, tasteless as the metaphors of the Fathers are in general, they are much more innocent and digestible than their arguments; — as the learned bishop we have just alluded to may perhaps by this time acknowledge; having found, we suspect, that his seventy folios are, like elephants in battle, not only ponderous, but dangerous auxiliaries, which, when once let loose, may be at least as formidable to friends as to foes. This, indeed, has always been a characteristic of the writings of the Fathers. This ambidexterous faculty — this sort of Swiss versatility in fighting equally well upon both sides of the question, has distinguished them through the whole history of Theological controversy:—The same authors, the same passages have been quoted with equal confidence, by Arians and Athanasians, Jesuits and Jansenists, Transubstantiators and Typifiers. Nor is it only the dull and bigotted who have had recourse to these self-refuted authorities for their purpose; we often find the same anxiety for their support, the same disposition to account them, as Chillingworth says, ‘Fathers when *for*, and children when *against*,’ in quarters where a greater degree of good sense and fairness might be expected. Even Middleton himself, who makes so light of the opinions of the Fathers, in his learned and manly Inquiry into Miracles, yet courts their

* Boyd’s Translations from the Fathers.—Vol. xxiv. page 58. November, 1814.

sanction with much assiduity for his favourite system of allegorizing the Mosaic history of the creation ; — a point on which, of all others, their alliance is most dangerous, as there is no subject upon which their Pagan imaginations have rioted more ungovernably.

The errors of these primitive Doctors of the Church, — their Christian Heathenism and Heathen Christianity, which led them to look for the Trinity among those shadowy forms that peopled the twilight groves of the Academy, and to array the meek, self-humbling Christian in the proud and iron armour of the Portico, — their bigotted rejection of the most obvious truths in natural science, — the bewildering vibration of their moral doctrines, never resting between the extremes of laxity and rigour, — their credulity, their inconsistencies of conduct and opinion, and, worst of all, their forgeries and falsehoods, have already been so often and so ably exposed by divines of all countries, religions and sects — the Dupins, Mosheims, Middletons, Clarkes, Jortins, &c. that it seems superfluous to add another line upon the subject ; though we are not quite sure that, in the present state of Europe, a discussion of the merits of the Fathers is not as seasonable and even fashionable a topic as we could select. — At a time when the Inquisition is re-established by our ‘ beloved Ferdinand ;’ when the Pope again brandishes the keys of St. Peter with an air worthy of a successor of the Hildebrands and Perettis ; when canonization is about to be inflicted on another Louis, and little silver models of embryo princes are gravely vowed at the shrine of the Virgin ; — in times like these, it is not too much to expect that such enlightened authors as St. Jerome and Tertullian may soon become the classics of most of the Continental courts. We shall therefore make no further apology for prefacing our remarks upon Mr. Boyd’s translations with a few brief and desultory notices of some of the most distinguished Fathers and their works.

St. Justin, the Martyr, is usually considered as the well-spring of most of those strange errors which flowed so abundantly through the early ages of the Church, and spread around them in their course such luxuriance of absurdity. The most amiable, and therefore the least contagious of his heterodoxies*, was that which led him to patronize the souls of Socrates and other Pagans, in consideration of those glimmerings of the divine Logos which his fancy discovered through the dark night of Heathenism. The absurd part of this opinion remained, while its tolerant spirit evaporated : and while these Pagans were still allowed to have known something of the Trinity, they were yet damned for not knowing more, with most unrelenting orthodoxy.

The belief of an intercourse between angels and women — founded upon a false version of a text in Genesis — and of an abundant progeny of demons in consequence, is one of those monstrous notions of St. Justin and other Fathers, which show how little they had yet purged off the grossness of Heathen mythology, and in how many respects their Heaven was but Olympus with other names † : — Yet we can hardly

* Still more benevolent was Origen’s never-to-be-forgiven dissent from the doctrine of eternal damnation. To this amiable weakness, more than any thing else, this Father seems to have owed the forfeiture of his rank in the Calendar ; — and in return for his anxiety to rescue the human race from hell, he has been sent thither himself by more than one Catholic theologian.

† See, for their reveries on this subject, Clem. Alex. *Stromat.* lib. v. p. 550. Ed. Lutet. 1629. — Tertullian. *de Habitu Mulieb.* cap. 2. and the extraordinary

be angry with them for this one error, when we recollect, that possibly to their enamoured Angels we owe the beautiful world of Sylphs and Gnomes*; and that perhaps at this moment we might have wanted Pope's most exquisite Poem, if the Septuagint Version had translated the book of Genesis correctly.

This doctrine, as far as it concerned angelic natures, was at length indignantly disavowed by St. Chrysostom. But Demons were much too useful a race to be so easily surrendered to reasoning or ridicule;—there was no getting up a decent miracle without them; exorcists would have been out of employ, and saints at a loss for temptation:—Accordingly, the writings of these holy Doctors abound with such stories of demoniacal possession, as make us alternately smile at their weakness and blush for their dishonesty.† Nor are they chargeable only with the impostures of their own times; the sanction they gave to this petty diabolism has made them responsible for whole centuries of juggling. Indeed, whoever is anxious to contemplate a picture of human folly and human knavery, at the same time ludicrous and melancholy, may find it in a history of the exploits of Demons, from the days of the Fathers down to modern times;—from about the date of that theatrical little devil of Tertullian, (so triumphantly referred to by Jeremy Collier,) who claimed a right to take possession of a woman in the theatre, 'because he there found her on his own ground,' to the gallant demons commemorated by Bodin‡ and Remigius§, and such tragical farces as the possession of the nuns of Loudun. The same features of craft and dupery are discoverable through the whole from beginning to end; and when we have read of that miraculous person, Gregory Thaumaturgus, writing a familiar epistle to Satan, and then turn to the story of the Young Nun, in Bodin, in whose box was found a love-letter 'à son cher dæmon||,' we need not ask more perfect specimens of the two wretched extremes of imposture and credulity, than these two very different letter-writers afford.

The only class of demons whose loss we regret, and whose visitations we would gladly have restored us, are those 'seducing sprites, 'who,' as Theophilus of Antioch tells us, 'confessed themselves to 'be the same that had inspired the Heathen Poets.' The learned Father has not favoured us with any particulars of these interesting spirits: has said nothing of the ample wings of fire, which, we doubt

passage of this Father (de Virgin. veland.), where his editor Pamelius endeavours to save his morality at the expense of his Latinity, by the substitution of the word 'excussat' for 'excusat.' See also St. Basil de verâ Virginitate, tom. i. p. 747. edit. Paris; though it is but fair to say, that Basil's biographer Hermant, and others, think this treatise spurious; and it certainly contains many things not of the most sanctified description.

* Le Comte de Gabalis.

† Middleton's Free Inquiry.—It would be difficult to add any thing new to this writer upon the subject; and he is too well known to render extracts necessary.

‡ De la Demonomanie des Sorciers.

§ Demonolatreia, lib. i. cap. 6. The depositions of the two sorceresses, Alexia Dirigæa and Claudia Fellæa, are particularly curious.

|| He quotes the story from Wier, a great patron of the demons of that time, who, we are told, invented a 'Monarchie Diabolique avec les noms et les surnoms 'de cinq cens soixante douze Princes de Démons, et de sept millions quatre 'cens cinq mille neuf cens vingt-six diables, sauf erreur de calcul.'—Teissier, Eloges des Hommes Savans.

not, the demons of Homer and Pindar spread out, nor described the laughing eyes of Horace's familiar, nor even the pointed tail of the short devil of Martial;—but we own we should like to see such cases of possession in our days; and though we Reviewers are a kind of exorcists, employed to cast out the evil demon of scribbling, and even pride ourselves upon having performed some notable cures,—from *such* demoniacs we would refrain with reverence; nay, so anxiously dread the escape of the Spirit, that, for fear of accidents, we would not suffer a Saint to come near them.

The belief of a Millennium or temporal reign of Christ, during which the faithful were to be indulged in all sorts of sensual gratifications, may be reckoned among those gross errors, for which neither the Porch nor the Academy are accountable, but which grew up in the rank soil of oriental fanaticism, and were nursed into doctrines of Christianity by the Fathers. Though the world's best religion comes from the East, its very worst superstitions have sprung thence also;—as in the same quarter of the heavens arises the sunbeam that gives life to the flower, and the withering gale that blasts it. There is scarcely one of these fantastic opinions of the Fathers, that may not be traced among the fables of the antient Persians and Arabians. The voluptuous Jerusalem of St. Justin and Irenæus may be found in those glorious gardens of Iram, which were afterwards converted into the Paradise of the Faithful by Mahomet;—and their enamoured 'Sons of God' may be paralleled in the angels Harut and Marut of Eastern story*, who, bewildered by the influence of wine and beauty, forfeited their high celestial rank, and were degraded into teachers of magic upon earth.

The mischievous absurdity of some of the moral doctrines of the Fathers,—the state of apathy to which they would reduce their Gnostic or perfect Christian,—their condemnation of marriage and their Monkish fancies about celibacy,—the extreme to which they carried their notions of patience, even to the prohibition of all resistance to aggression, though the aggressor aimed at life itself;—the strange doctrine of St. Augustine, that the Saints are the only lawful proprietors of the things of this world, and that the wicked have no right whatever to their possessions, however human laws may decree to the contrary;—the indecencies in which too many of them have indulged in their writings†; the profane frivolity of Tertullian, in making God himself prescribe the length and measure of women's veils, in a special revelation to some ecstatic spinster; and the moral indignation with which Clemens Alexandrinus inveighs against white bread, periwigs, coloured stuffs and lap-dogs;—all these, and many more such puerile and pernicious absurdities open a wide field of weedy fancies, for ridicule to skim, and good sense to trample upon:—But we must content ourselves with referring to the works that have been written upon the subject;—particularly to the treatise 'de la Morale des Peres' of Barbeyrac;—which, though as dull and tiresome as could reasonably be expected from the joint efforts of the Fathers of the Church and a Law Professor of Groningen, abundantly proves that the moral tenets of these holy

* Notes on the Bahar-Danush.—Mariti gives the story differently.

† We need but refer to the second and third Books of the Pædagogus of Clemens Alexandrinus;—to some passages in Tertullian 'de Animâ'; and to the instances which La Mothe le Vayer has adduced from Chrysostom in his *Hexameron Rustique*.—Journ. Second.

men are for the most part unnatural, fanatical and dangerous ;—founded upon false interpretations of Holy Writ, and the most gross and anile ignorance of human nature ; and that a community of Christians, formed upon their plan, is the very Utopia of Monkery, idleness and fanaticism.

Luckily, the impracticability of these wretched doctrines was in general a sufficient antidote to their mischief: but there were two maxims, adopted and enforced by many of the Fathers, which deserve to be branded with particular reprobation, not only because they acted upon them continually themselves, to the disgrace of the Holy cause in which they were engaged, but because they have transmitted their contamination to posterity, and left the features of Christianity to this day disfigured by their taint. The first of these maxims—we give it in the words of Mosheim—was, ‘ that it is an act of virtue to deceive ‘ and lie, when by such means the interests of the Church may be ‘ promoted.’* To this profligate principle the world owes, not only the fables and forgeries of these primitive times, but many of those evasions, those compromises between conscience and expediency, which are still thought necessary and justifiable for the support of religious establishments. So industrious were the churchmen of the early ages in the inculcation of this monstrous doctrine, that we find the Bishop Heliodorus insinuating it, as a general principle of conduct, through the seductive medium of his Romance Theagenes and Chariclea.† The second maxim, ‘ equally horrible,’ says Mosheim, ‘ though in a different ‘ point of view, was, that errors in religion, when maintained and ad- ‘ hered to after proper admonition, are punishable with civil penalties ‘ and corporeal tortures.’ St. Augustine has the credit of originating this detestable doctrine ;—to him, it seems, we are indebted for first conjuring up that penal Spirit, which has now, for so many hundred years, walked the earth, and whose votaries, from the highest to the meanest, from St. Augustine down to Doctor Duigenan,—from the persecutors of the African Donatists to the calumniators and oppressors of the Irish Catholics,—are all equally disgraceful to that mild religion, in whose name they have dared to torment and subjugate mankind.

With respect to the literary merits of the Fathers, it will hardly be denied, that to the sanctity of their subjects they owe much of that imposing effect which they have produced upon the minds of their admirers. We have no doubt that the incoherent rhapsodies of the Pythia (whom, Strabo tell us, the ministers of the temple now and then helped to a verse) found many an orthodox critic among their hearers who preferred them to the sublimest strains of Homer and Pindar. Indeed, the very last of the Fathers, St. Gregory the Great, has at once settled the point for all critics of theological writings, by declaring that the words of Divine Wisdom are not amenable to the laws of the vulgar grammar of this world‡ ;—‘ non debent verba cælestis originis subesse ‘ regulis Donati.’

It must surely be according to some such code of criticism that Lactantius has been ranked above Cicero, and that Erasmus himself has ventured to prefer St. Basil to Demosthenes. Even the harsh, muddy, and unintelligible Tertullian, whom Salmasius gave up in despair, has

* Ecclesiast. Hist. cent. 4. part ii. chap. iii.

† Καλὸν γὰρ ποτὲ καὶ τὸ ψεῦδος, ὅταν ὠφελεν τὰς λέγοντας, μηδὲν καταβλάπτει τὰς ἀκροῦντας. Æthiopic. lib. i.

‡ In the dedication of his Book of Morals.

found a warm admirer in Balzac, who professes himself enchanted with the 'black lustre' of his style, and compares his obscurity to the rich and glossy darkness of ebony. The three Greek Fathers, whom the writer before us has selected, are in general considered the most able and eloquent of any; and of their merits our readers shall presently have an opportunity of judging, as far as a few specimens from Mr. Boyd's translations can enable them:—but, for our own parts, we confess, instead of wondering with this gentleman that his massy favourites should be 'doomed to a temporary oblivion,'—we are only surprised that such affected declaimers should ever have enjoyed a better fate; or that even the gas of holiness with which they are inflated, could ever have enabled its coarse and gaudy vehicles to soar so high into the upper regions of reputation. It is South, we believe, who has said, that 'in order to be pious, it is not necessary to be dull;' but, even dulness itself is far more decorous than the puerile conceits, the flaunting metaphors, and all that false finery of rhetorical declamation, in which these writers have tricked out their most solemn and important subjects. At the time, indeed, when they studied and wrote, the glories of antient literature had faded;—sophists and rhetoricians had taken the place of philosophers and orators; nor is it wonderful that from such instructors as Libanius, they should learn to reason ill and write affectedly:—but the same florid effeminacies of style, which in a love-letter of Philostratus, or an ecphrasis of Libanius, are harmless at least, if not amusing, become altogether disgusting, when applied to sacred topics; and are little less offensive to piety and good taste, than those rude exhibitions of the old Moralities, in which Christ and his Apostles appeared dressed out in trinkets, tinsel, and embroidery.

The chief advantage that a scholar can now derive from the perusal of these voluminous Doctors, is the light they throw upon the rites and tenets of the Pagans,—in the exposure and refutation of which they are, as is usually the case, much more successful than in the defence and illustration of their own. In this respect Clemens Alexandrinus is one of the most valuable;—being chiefly a compiler of the dogmas of antient learning, and abounding with curious notices of the religion and literature of the Gentiles. Indeed the manner in which some of the Fathers have been edited, sufficiently proves that they were considered by their commentators as merely a sort of inferior Classics, upon which to hang notes about heathen Gods and philosophers. Ludovicus Vives upon the 'City of God' of St. Augustine, is an example of this class of theological annotators, whom a hint about the three Graces, or the God of Lampsacus, awakens into more activity than whole pages about the Trinity and the Resurrection.

The best specimen of eloquence we have met among the Fathers,—at least that which we remember to have read with most pleasure,—is the *Charisteria*, or Oration of Thanks, delivered by Gregory Thaumaturgus to his instructor Origen. Though rhetorical like the rest, it is of a more manly and simple character, and does credit alike to the master and the disciple.* But, upon the whole, perhaps St. Augustine is the author whom—if ever we should be doomed, in penance for our sins, to select a Father for our private reading—we should choose, as,

* The abstract of this Oration, which Halloix professes to give, in his *Defence of Origen*, is so very wide of the original, that we suspect he must have received it, at second hand, from some inaccurate reporter.

in our opinion, the least tiresome of the brotherhood. It is impossible not to feel interested in those struggles between passion and principle, out of which his maturer age rose so triumphant; and there is a conscious frailty mingling with his precepts, and at times throwing its shade over the light of his piety, which gives his writings an air peculiarly refreshing, after the pompous rigidity of Chrysostom, the stoic affectations of Clemens Alexandrinus, and the antithetical trifling of Gregory Nazianzen. If it were not too for the indelible stain which his conduct to the Donatists has left upon his memory, the philosophic mildness of his Tract against the Manichæans, and the candour with which he praises his heretical antagonist Pelagius, as ‘*sanctum, bonum et prædicandum virum*,’ would have led us to select him as an example of that tolerating spirit, which—we grieve to say—is so very rare a virtue among the Saints.—Though Augustine, after the season of his follies was over, very sedulously avoided the society of females, yet he corresponded with most of the holy women of his time; and there is a strain of tenderness through many of his letters to them, in which his weakness for the sex rather interestingly betrays itself. It is in the consolatory Epistles, particularly, that we discover these embers of his youthful temperament;—as in the 93d, to Italica, on the death of her husband, and the 263d, to Sapida, in return for a garment she had sent him, in the thoughts of which there is a considerable degree of fancy as well as tenderness.

We cannot allude to these fair correspondents of Augustine, without remarking, that the warmest and best allies of the Fathers, in adopting their fancies and spreading their miracles, appear to have been those enthusiastic female pupils, by groupes of whom they were all constantly encircled*;—whose imaginations required but little fuel of fact, and whose tongues would not suffer a wonder to cool in circulating. The same peculiarities of temperament, which recommended females in the Pagan world, as the fittest sex to receive the inspirations of the tripod, made them valuable agents also in the imposing machinery of miracles. At the same time, it must be confessed that they performed services of a much higher nature; and that to no cause whatever is Christianity more signally indebted for the impression it produced in those primitive ages, than to the pure piety, the fervid zeal, and heroic devotedness of the female converts. In the lives of these holy virgins and matrons,—in the humility of their belief and the courage of their sufferings, the Gospel found a far better illustration than in all the voluminous writings of the Fathers: there are some of them, indeed, whose adventures are sufficiently romantic, to suggest materials to the poet and the novelist; and Ariosto himself has condescended to borrow from the Legends† his curious story of Isabella and the Moor,—to the no small horror of the pious Cardinal Baronius, who remarks with much asperity on the

* None of the Fathers, with the exception perhaps of St. Jerome, appears to have had such influence over the female mind as Origen. His correspondence with Barbara is still extant. She was shut up by her Pagan father in a tower with two windows, to which, in honour of the Trinity, we are told, she added a third. St. Jerome had to endure much scandal, in consequence of his two favourite pupils, Paula and Melania, of which he complains very bitterly in the epistle ‘*Si tibi putem*,’ &c.

† From the story of the Roman virgin Euphrasia. See also the Life of Euphrosyna (in *Bergomensis de Claris Mulieribus*), which, with the difference of a father and lover, resembles the latter part of the *Mémoires de Comminges*.

sacrilege of which ‘that vulgar poet’ has been guilty, in daring to introduce this sacred story among his fictions. To the little acquaintance these women could have formed with the various dogmas of antient philosophy, and to the unincumbered state of their minds in consequence, may be attributed much of that warmth and clearness, with which the light of Christianity shone through them;—whereas, in the learned heads of the Fathers, this illumination found a more dense and coloured medium, which turned its celestial beam astray, and tinged it with all sorts of gaudy imaginations. Even where these women indulged in theological reveries, as they did not embody their fancies into folios, posterity, at least, has been nothing the worse for them; nor should we have known the strange notions of Saint Macrina about the Soul and the Resurrection, if her brother, Gregory of Nyssa, had not rather officiously informed us of them, in the Dialogue he professes to have held with her on these important subjects.*

We come now to Mr. Boyd’s Translations, which are preceded by a short, but pompous preface, in whose loftiness of style we at once discover that, like that insect which takes the colour of the leaf it feeds upon, the Translator has caught the gaudy hue of his originals most successfully. Indeed, from the evident tendencies of this gentleman’s taste, we should pronounce him a most dangerous person to be entrusted with a version of the Fathers; for, the fault of these writers being a superabundance of metaphors, and Mr. Boyd being quite as metaphorically given as themselves, the consequence is, that, wherever there is a flourish of this kind in the original, he is sure to add another of his own to it in the translation; which is really ‘too much of a good thing:’—If double flowers are to be held monsters in Botany, with much greater reason must these double and treble flowers of rhetoric be accounted monstrosities in the system of taste. The first specimen we shall give is from ‘the Peroration of St. Chrysostom’s Third Oration ‘on the Incomprehensible,’ where the Saint is speaking of the season of the Eucharist.

‘ In a moment so sublime, how exalted should be thy hope, how great thy longing for salvation!—Heaven’s canopy resounds not with the piercing cry of mortals only: angels fall prostrate before their Lord: archangels kneel before their God. The season itself becomes an argument on their lips; the oblation an advocate in their cause. And as men, in the office of intercession, cutting down branches of olive, wave them before their king, by the blooming plant reminding him of mercy and compassion; so likewise the host of angels, in the place of olive-branches extending the body of their Lord, invoke the common Parent in the cause of human nature!—*What strain seraphic bursts on my enraptured organs? I hear their celestial accents! I hear them even now exclaiming—*“We entreat for those whom thou didst love with so God-like an affection, as to yield up thy life for theirs! We pour our petitions in behalf of those for whom thou didst shed thy blood!”’ pp. 23, 24.

Whatever may be thought of the sublimity of the passage printed in Italics, St. Chrysostom has nothing to do with either the praise or the blame of it; as he merely says, that these angels ‘invoke the Lord for the human race, almost, or all but exclaiming (μόνονεχὶ λέγοντες) we

* Opera, tom. ii. p. 177. Edit. Paris, 1638.

‘ pray for those,’ &c.—So that the ‘seraphic strains’ and ‘enraptured organs’ are all to be set down to Mr. Boyd’s account.

In the extract which follows, upon the efficacy of prayer, St. Chrysostom says — ‘I speak of that prayer, which is offered up with earnestness ; with a sorrowing soul, and an enthusiastic spirit ; for that is the prayer which ascends to Heaven.’—Thus it is in the original ; but how has the poetic Mr. Boyd translated this simple passage ?

‘ I speak of that prayer which is the child of a contrite spirit, the offspring of a soul converted, born in a blaze of unutterable enthusiasm, and winged, like lightning, for the skies ! ’ p. 28.

This eulogy of Prayer concludes with the following simile.

‘ For, as the tree, whose roots are buried in the earth, though assaulted by a thousand tempests, knows not to be rent asunder, and defies the storm ; so likewise, the prayer implanted in the soul, and from thence arising, spreads wide its luxuriant foliage, elevates its aspiring head, and laughs unhurt at the impotent assailer.’ p. 31.

Here again we must step in to the defence of the original, which says nothing whatever of the prayer’s ‘luxuriant foliage,’ nor of this indecorous ‘laugh,’ which Mr. Boyd has conferred upon it :—but there is no end to his adscititious graces ;—he seems indeed to think that, as a Translator of Saints, it is but right for him to deal in such works of supererogation ; but we are sorry to tell him, that, — unlike the superfluities of those pious persons — *his* overdoings are all of the damnatory description.

We are next presented with extracts from Gregory Nazianzen, and again doomed to suffer under perpetual metaphors, from the joint stock of the Saint and his Translator :—not that we would have Mr. Boyd set us down as foes to metaphors ; we are only unreasonable enough to require that they should have a little meaning in them ; that they should condescend to be useful as well as decorative, and, like the thyrsus of the antients, carry a weapon under their foliage.

St. Gregory, in the Funeral oration upon Cæsarius, says, that the tears of his mother were ‘subdued by philosophy’—*δάκρυσιν εἰπρωμένους φιλοσοφία*—but this is too matter-of-fact for Mr. Boyd, who renders it, ‘her tears are dried by the sweet breezes of philosophy,’ (p. 121,)—and, in the very next page, the twin metaphors of which he is, as usual, delivered, agree, it must be owned, rather awkwardly together, and lead us to think he has formed his taste for eloquence upon the model of a certain noble and diplomatic orator, who is well known to deal in this broken ware of rhetoric,—such as ‘the feature, Sir, upon which this question hinges,’ &c. &c.—The following is Mr. Boyd’s imitation of that noble Lord, in what may be called the Metaphoroclastic style—

‘ Such, O Cæsarius, is my funeral tribute. These are the *first fruits* of mine *unfledged* eloquence, of which thou hast oft complained that it was *buried* in the shade.’ p. 122.

Seriously, if this learned gentleman had taken the trouble of consulting his Suicerus upon the word *ἀπαρχαί*, he would not, we think, have spoiled this truly scriptural figure by interpolations so tasteless, and so wholly unauthorized by the text.

About the middle of this Peroration, we find the following passage.

‘ Will he adorn no more his mind with the theories of Plato and of Aristotle, of Pyrrho and Democritus, of Heraclitus and Anaxagoras, and Cleanthes and Epicurus, and I know not how many *disciples of venerated Academe and Stoa* ? ’ p. 134.

The original text of these last words is — καὶ οὐκ οἶδ' οἷς τισὶ τῶν ἐκ τῆς σεμνῆς σοῦς καὶ ἀκαδημαίας — ‘and I know not how many from the venerable ‘Porch and the Academy.’ What could induce Mr. Boyd to translate this passage so strangely? We hope it was only affectation; though we own we cannot help fearing — in spite of all his Greek — that, like the worthy French gentleman who looked for Aristocracy and Democracy in the map, he took these said ‘Academe and Stoa’ for two venerable persons that kept school in Athens.

We shall next give an extract from St. Gregory’s Panegyric upon his deceased friend St. Basil, as a specimen not only of Mr. Boyd’s best manner of writing, but of that unfatherly indifference with which, like a well-known bird, he deposits his own offspring in the nest of another. The words of the original are simply these:—‘What joy is there now ‘in our public meetings? what pleasure in our feasts, our assemblies, ‘or our churches?’—which small sum of words this munificent translator has, out of his pure bounty, swelled to the following considerable amount.

‘Alas! what joy can we now experience in the feast, what intercourse of soul in the public meetings? Whom shall we now consult? Shall we seek the next eminent? There are none. He hath left a chasm in the world, and there is no one to fill it up. Where then shall we wander, and how shall we employ the vacant hours? Shall we bend our steps into the Forum? Ah, no; it was there that Basil smiled upon his people. Shall we return into the Church? Ah, no; it was there that he fed us with the bread of life.’ p. 190.

In the 192d page, he is equally *sui profusus*;—thus,

‘When I peruse his expositions of the sacred page, I stop not at the letter, I rest not at the superficies of the word; but, soaring on renovated wings, I ascend from discovery to discovery, from light to light, till I reach the sublimest point, *and sit enthroned on the riches of Revelation.*’

—of which last extraordinary image Mr. Hugh Stuart Boyd is sole inventor and proprietor;—indeed not a tenth part of this ‘Extract’ is to be found in the original; and the Saint may be truly said to sink under the obligations he owes to his translator.

St. Gregory is almost the only Father who has thought it not beneath his dignity to write verses;—there are some by Tertullian; but the poems under the name of Lactantius are, in general, we believe, rejected as spurious; and one of them is supposed to have been written by that most jovial of bishops, Venantius Fortunatus.* The sparkling conceits of Gregory’s style are much more endurable in verse than in prose; and his similes are sometimes ingenious, if not beautiful. But we do not think Mr. Boyd has been very happy in his selections, either from this Father’s poetry or the prose of St. Basil, whose pathetic remonstrance ‘to a fallen Virgin’† would have furnished more favourable

* Whose works, written chiefly ‘inter pocula’—as he confesses in his dedicatory epistle to Pope Gregory—may be found in the Bibliotheca Patrum, tom. viii. It is a sad proof of the rapid progress of corruption, to find the head of the Christian Church, in a few centuries after the death of Christ, thus openly patronizing such frivolous profligacy.

† There are several very touching passages throughout this letter; particularly that beginning — πᾶ μὲν σοὶ τὸ σεμνὸν ἑκεῖνο σχῆμα; κ. τ. λ.—Fenelon says of it, ‘On ne peut rien voir de plus éloquent que son Epître à une vierge qui étoit tombée; à mon sens c’est un chef-d’œuvre.’ Sur l’Eloquence.

specimens of saintly eloquence than any composition throughout this volume.

Mr. Boyd's notes consist chiefly of rapturous eulogies on the grandeur, brilliancy, and profoundness of his originals;—on the 'most 'super-eminent sublimity' of Plotinus (p. 291); and the 'fascinating' and 'enchanting' Loves of Daphnis and Chloe (passim). He has detected too, some marvellous plagiarisms; for instance, that Milton, in saying 'Gloomy as night,' must have pilfered from St. Basil, who, it appears, has said 'dark as night;'—unless, as Mr. Boyd candidly and sagaciously adds, 'both Basil and Milton have borrowed the idea from 'Homer's νυκτὶ ἰοικώς.' p. 237.

The construction of this gentleman's English is not always very easy or elegant; as may appear from such sentences as 'cherishing in the 'minds of men him honoured there.' (p. 123.)—'it thrills with a poetic 'ecstasy, of which the offspring is reflection sapient.' (p. 240.)—'having made mention of the prayers which for demoniacs are offered.' (p. 16.) But it is time, we feel, to bring this article to a conclusion;—hic locus est Somni.—If we could flatter ourselves that Mr. Boyd would listen to us, we would advise him to betake himself as speedily as possible from such writers as his Gregories, Cyrils, &c.—which can never serve any other purpose than that of a vain parade of cumbrous erudition—to studies of a purer and more profitable nature, more orthodox in taste as well as in theology. He will find, in a few pages of Barrow or Taylor, more rational piety, and more true eloquence, than in all the Fathers of the Church together; and if, as we think probable, under this better culture, his talents should bring forth fairer fruits, we shall hail such a result of our councils with pleasure,—and shall even forgive him the many personal risks he has made us run, in poisoning down our huge folio Saints from their shelves.*

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.†

It is no very good symptom either of nations or individuals, that they deal much in vaticination. Happy men are full of the present, for its bounty suffices them; and wise men also, for its duties engage them. Our grand business undoubtedly is, not to *see* what lies dimly at a distance, but to *do* what lies clearly at hand.

Know'st thou *Yesterday*, its aim and reason?
 Work'st thou well *To-day* for worthy things?
 Then calmly wait the *Morrow's* hidden season,
 And fear not thou, what hap soe'er it brings!

* It is to this clever article, I presume, that Lord Byron alludes in the following terms, in one of his letters to his friend and biographer, Mr. Moore. 'I have redde thee, dear M——, on the *Fathers*, and it is excellent well. Positively, you must not leave off *reviewing*. You shine in it—you kill in it; and this Article has been taken for Sidney Smith's, as I heard in town, which proves not only your proficiency in parsonology, but that you have all the airs of a veteran critic at your first onset. So, prithee, go on and prosper.' *Moore's Life of Byron*, Vol. i. Letter 219.

† The Rise, Progress, and Present State of Public Opinion in Great Britain.—Vol. xlix. page 439. June, 1829.

But man's 'large discourse of reason' *will* look 'before and after;' and, impatient of 'the ignorant present time,' will indulge in anticipation far more than profits him. Seldom can the unhappy be persuaded that the evil of the day is sufficient for it; and the ambitious will not be content with present splendour—but paints yet more glorious triumphs, on the cloud-curtain of the future.

The case, however, is still worse with nations. For here the prophets are not one, but many; and each incites and confirms the other—so that the fatidical fury spreads wider and wider, till at last even a Saul must join in it. For there is still a real magic in the action and reaction of minds on one another. The casual delirium of a few becomes, by this mysterious reverberation, the frenzy of many; men lose the use, not only of their understandings, but of their bodily senses; while the most obdurate, unbelieving hearts melt, like the rest, in the furnace where all are cast, as victims and as fuel. It is grievous to think, that this noble omnipotence of Sympathy has been so rarely the Aaron's-rod of Truth and Virtue, and so often the Enchanter's-rod of Wickedness and Folly! No solitary miscreant, scarcely any solitary maniac, would venture on such actions and imaginations, as large communities of sane men have, in such circumstances, entertained as sound wisdom. Witness long scenes of the French Revolution! a whole people drunk with blood and arrogance—and then with terror and cruelty—and with desperation, and blood again! Levity is no protection against such visitations, nor the utmost earnestness of character. The New England Puritan burns witches, wrestles for months with the horrors of Satan's invisible world, and all ghastly phantasms, the daily and hourly precursors of the Last Day; then suddenly bethinks him that he is frantic, weeps bitterly, prays contritely—and the history of that gloomy season lies behind him like a frightful dream.

And Old England has had her share of such frenzies and panics; though happily, like other old maladies, they have grown milder of late: and since the days of Titus Oates, have mostly passed without loss of men's lives, or indeed without much other loss than that of reason, for the time, in the sufferers. In this mitigated form, however, the distemper is of pretty regular recurrence—and may be reckoned on at intervals, like other natural visitations; so that reasonable men deal with it, as the Londoners do with their fogs—go cautiously out into the groping crowd, and patiently carry lanterns at noon; knowing, by a well-grounded faith, that the sun is still in existence, and will one day reappear. How often have we heard, for the last fifty years, that the country was wrecked, and fast sinking; whereas, up to this date, the country is entire and afloat! The 'State in Danger' is a condition of things, which we have witnessed a hundred times; and as for the church, it has seldom been out of 'danger' since we can remember it.

All men are aware, that the present is a crisis of this sort; and why it has become so. The repeal of the Test Acts, and then of the Catholic disabilities, has struck many of their admirers with an indescribable astonishment. Those things seemed fixed and immovable—deep as the foundations of the world; and, lo! in a moment they have vanished; and their place knows them no more! Our worthy friends mistook the slumbering Leviathan for an island—often as they had been assured, that Intolerance was, and could be nothing but a Monster; and so, mooring under the lee, they had anchored comfortably in his scaly rind, thinking to take good cheer—as for some space they

did. But now their Leviathan has suddenly dived under ; and they can no longer be fastened in the stream of time ; but must drift forward on it, even like the rest of the world — no very appalling fate, we think, could they but understand it ; which, however, they will not yet, for a season. Their little island is gone, and sunk deep amid confused eddies ; and what is left worth caring for in the universe ? What is it to them, that the great continents of the earth are still standing ; and the polestar, and all our loadstars, in the heavens, still shining and eternal ? Their cherished little haven is gone, and they will not be comforted ! And therefore, day after day, in all manner of periodical or perennial publications, the most lugubrious predictions are sent forth. The king has virtually abdicated ; the church is a widow, without jointure ; public principle is gone ; private honesty is going ; society, in short, is fast falling in pieces ; and a time of unmingled evil is come on us. At such a period it was to be expected that the rage of prophecy should be more than usually excited. Accordingly, the Millennarians have come forth on the right hand, and the Millites on the left. The Fifth-monarchy men prophesy from the Bible, and the Utilitarians from Bentham. The one announce that the last of the seals is to be opened, positively, in the year 1860 ; and the other assure us, that ‘ the greatest happiness ‘ principle ’ is to make a heaven of earth, in a still shorter time. We know these symptoms too well, to think it necessary or safe to interfere with them. Time and the hours will bring relief to all parties. The grand encourager of Delphic or other noises is — the Echo. Left to themselves, they will soon dissipate, and die away in space.

Meanwhile, we too admit that the present is an important time — as all present time necessarily is. The poorest day that passes over us is the conflux of two Eternities ! and is made up of currents that issue from the remotest Past, and flow onwards into the remotest Future. We were wise indeed, could we discern truly the signs of our own time ; and, by knowledge of its wants and advantages, wisely adjust our own position in it. Let us then, instead of gazing idly into the obscure distance, look calmly around us, for a little, on the perplexed scene where we stand. Perhaps, on a more serious inspection, something of its perplexity will disappear, some of its distinctive characters, and deeper tendencies, more clearly reveal themselves ; whereby our own relations to it, our own true aims and endeavours in it, may also become clearer.

Were we required to characterise this age of ours by any single epithet, we should be tempted to call it, not an Heroical, Devotional, Philosophical, or Moral Age, but, above all others, the Mechanical Age. It is the Age of Machinery, in every outward and inward sense of that word ; the age which, with its whole undivided might, forwards, teaches, and practises the great art of adapting means to ends. Nothing is now done directly, or by hand ; all is by rule and calculated contrivance. For the simplest operation, some helps and accompaniments, some cunning, abbreviating process is in readiness. Our old modes of exertion are all discredited, and thrown aside. On every hand, the living artisan is driven from his workshop, to make room for a speedier inanimate one. The shuttle drops from the fingers of the weaver, and falls into iron fingers that ply it faster. The sailor furls his sail, and lays down his oar, and bids a strong unwearied servant, on vaporous wings, bear him through the waters. Men have crossed oceans by steam ;

the Birmingham Fire-king has visited the fabulous East ; and the genius of the Cape, were there any Camoens now to sing it, has again been alarmed, and with far stranger thunders than Gama's. There is no end to machinery. Even the horse is stripped of his harness, and finds a fleet fire-horse yoked in his stead. Nay, we have an artist that hatches chickens by steam—the very brood hen is to be superseded ! For all earthly, and for some unearthly purposes, we have machines and mechanic furtherances ; for mincing our cabbages ; for casting us into magnetic sleep. We remove mountains, and make seas our smooth highway ; nothing can resist us. We war with rude nature ; and, by our resistless engines, come off always victorious, and loaded with spoils.

What wonderful accessions have thus been made, and are still making, to the physical power of mankind ; how much better fed, clothed, lodged, and, in all outward respects, accommodated, men now are, or might be, by a given quantity of labour, is a grateful reflection which forces itself on every one. What changes, too, this addition of power is introducing into the social system ; how wealth has more and more increased, and at the same time gathered itself more and more into masses, strangely altering the old relations, and increasing the distance between the rich and the poor, will be a question for Political Economists—and a much more complex and important one than any they have yet engaged with. But leaving these matters for the present, let us observe how the mechanical genius of our time has diffused itself into quite other provinces. Not the external and physical alone is now managed by machinery, but the internal and spiritual also. Here, too, nothing follows its spontaneous course, nothing is left to be accomplished by old, natural methods. Every thing has its cunningly devised implements, its pre-established apparatus ; it is not done by hand, but by machinery. Thus we have machines for education ; Lancastrian machines ; Hamiltonian machines—Monitors, maps, and emblems. Instruction, that mysterious communing of Wisdom with Ignorance, is no longer an indefinable tentative process, requiring a study of individual aptitudes, and a perpetual variation of means and methods, to attain the same end ; but a secure, universal, straightforward business, to be conducted in the gross, by proper mechanism, with such intellect as comes to hand. Then, we have Religious machines, of all imaginable varieties—the Bible Society, professing a far higher and heavenly structure, is found, on inquiry, to be altogether an earthly contrivance, supported by collection of monies, by fomenting of vanities, by puffing, intrigue, and chicane—and yet, in effect, a very excellent machine for converting the heathen. It is the same in all other departments. Has any man, or any society of men, a truth to speak, a piece of spiritual work to do, they can nowise proceed at once, and with the mere natural organs, but must first call a public meeting, appoint committees, issue prospectuses, eat a public dinner ; in a word, construct or borrow machinery, wherewith to speak it and do it. Without machinery they were hopeless, helpless—a colony of Hindoo weavers squatting in the heart of Lancashire. Then every machine must have its moving power, in some of the great currents of society : every little sect among us, Unitarians, Utilitarians, Anabaptists, Phrenologists, must each have its periodical, its monthly or quarterly magazine—hanging out, like its windmill, into the *popularis aura*, to grind meal for the society.

With individuals, in like manner, natural strength avails little. No individual now hopes to accomplish the poorest enterprise single-

handed, and without mechanical aids ; he must make interest with some existing corporation, and till his field with their oxen. In these days, more emphatically than ever, ‘to live, signifies to unite with a party, or ‘to make one.’ Philosophy, Science, Art, Literature, all depend on machinery. No Newton, by silent meditation, now discovers the system of the world from the falling of an apple ; but some quite other than Newton stands in his Museum, his Scientific Institution, and behind whole batteries of retorts, digesters, and galvanic piles, imperatively ‘interrogates Nature,’—who, however, shows no haste to answer. In defect of Raphaels, and Angelos, and Mozarts, we have Royal Academies of Painting, Sculpture, Music ; whereby the languishing spirit of Art may be strengthened by the more generous diet of a Public Kitchen. Literature, too, has its Paternoster-row mechanism, its Trade dinners, its Editorial conclaves, and huge subterranean, puffing bellows ; so that books are not only printed, but, in a great measure, written and sold, by machinery. National culture, spiritual benefit of all sorts, is under the same management. No Queen Christina, in these times, needs to send for her Descartes : no King Frederick for his Voltaire, and painfully nourish him with pensions and flattery ; but any sovereign of taste, who wishes to enlighten his people, has only to impose a new tax, and with the proceeds establish Philosophic Institutes. Hence the Royal and Imperial Societies, the Bibliothèques, Glyptothèques, Sechnothèques, which front us in all capital cities, like so many well-finished hives, to which it is expected the stray agencies of Wisdom will swarm of their own accord, and hive and make honey. In like manner, among ourselves, when it is thought that religion is declining, we have only to vote half a million’s worth of bricks and mortar, and build new churches. In Ireland, it seems they have gone still farther—having actually established a ‘Penny-a-week Purgatory Society !’ Thus does the Genius of Mechanism stand by to help us in all difficulties and emergencies ; and, with his iron back, bears all our burdens.

These things, which we state lightly enough here, are yet of deep import, and indicate a mighty change in our whole manner of existence. For the same habit regulates, not our modes of action alone, but our modes of thought and feeling. Men are grown mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand. They have lost faith in individual endeavour, and in natural force, of any kind. Not for internal perfection, but for external combinations and arrangements, for institutions, constitutions—for Mechanism of one sort or other, do they hope and struggle. Their whole efforts, attachments, opinions, turn on mechanism, and are of a mechanical character.

We may trace this tendency, we think, very distinctly, in all the great manifestations of our time ; in its intellectual aspect, the studies it most favours, and its manner of conducting them ; in its practical aspects, its politics, arts, religion, morals ; in the whole sources, and throughout the whole currents, of its spiritual, no less than its material activity.

Consider, for example, the state of Science generally, in Europe, at this period. It is admitted, on all sides, that the Metaphysical and Moral Sciences are falling into decay, while the Physical are engrossing, every day, more respect and attention. In most of the European nations, there is now no such thing as a Science of Mind ; only more or less advancement in the general science, or the special

sciences, of matter. The French were the first to desert this school of Metaphysics ; and though they have lately affected to revive it, it has yet no signs of vitality. The land of Malebranche, Pascal, Descartes, and Fenelon, has now only its Cousins and Villemains ; while, in the department of Physics, it reckons far other names. Among ourselves, the Philosophy of Mind, after a rickety infancy, which never reached the vigour of manhood, fell suddenly into decay, languished, and finally died out, with its last amiable cultivator, Professor Stewart. In no nation but Germany has any decisive effort been made in psychological science ; not to speak of any decisive result. The science of the age, in short, is physical, chemical, physiological, and, in all shapes, mechanical. Our favourite Mathematics, the highly prized exponent of all these other sciences, has also become more and more mechanical. Excellence, in what is called its higher departments, depends less on natural genius, than on acquired expertness in wielding its machinery. Without undervaluing the wonderful results which a Lagrange, or Laplace, educes by means of it, we may remark, that its calculus, differential and integral, is little else than a more cunningly-constructed arithmetical mill, where the factors being put in, are, as it were, ground into the true product, under cover, and without other effort on our part, than steady turning of the handle. We have more Mathematics certainly than ever ; but less Mathesis. Archimedes and Plato could not have read the *Mécanique Céleste* ; but neither would the whole French Institute see aught in that saying, ‘ God geometrises ! ’ but a sentimental rodomontade.

From Locke’s time downwards, our whole Metaphysics have been physical ; not a spiritual Philosophy, but a material one. The singular estimation in which his Essay was so long held as a scientific work, (for the character of the man entitled all he said to veneration,) will one day be thought a curious indication of the spirit of these times. His whole doctrine is mechanical, in its aim and origin, in its method and its results. It is a mere discussion concerning the origin of our consciousness, or ideas, or whatever else they are called ; a genetic history of what we see *in* the mind. But the grand secrets of Necessity and Freewill of the mind’s vital or non-vital dependence on matter, of our mysterious relations to Time and Space, to God, to the universe, are not, in the faintest degree, touched on in their inquiries ; and seem not to have the smallest connexion with them.

The last class of our Scotch Metaphysicians had a dim notion that much of this was wrong ; but they knew not how to right it. The school of Reid had also from the first taken a mechanical course, not seeing any other. The singular conclusions at which Hume, setting out from their admitted premises, was arriving, brought this school into being ; they let loose Instinct, as an indiscriminating bandog, to guard them against these conclusions—they tugged lustily at the logical chain by which Hume was so coldly towing them and the world into bottomless abysses of Atheism and Fatalism. But the chain somehow snapped between them ; and the issue has been that nobody now cares about either—any more than about Hartley’s, Darwin’s, or Priestley’s contemporaneous doings in England. Hartley’s vibrations and vibratiuncles one would think were material and mechanical enough ; but our continental neighbours have gone still farther. One of their philosophers has lately discovered, that ‘ as the liver secretes bile, so does the brain secrete thought ; ’ which

astonishing discovery Dr. Cahanis, more lately still, in his *Rapports du Physique et du Morale de l'Homme*, has pushed into its minutest developments. The metaphysical philosophy of this last inquirer is certainly no shadowy or unsubstantial one. He fairly lays open our moral structure with his dissecting-knives and real metal probes; and exhibits it to the inspection of mankind, by Leuwenhoeck microscopes and inflation with the anatomical blowpipe. Thought, he is inclined to hold, is still secreted by the brain; but then Poetry and Religion (and it is really worth knowing) are ‘a product of the smaller intestines!’ We have the greatest admiration for this learned Doctor: with what scientific stoicism he walks through the land of wonders, unwondering—like a wise man through some huge, gaudy, imposing Vauxhall, whose fire-works, cascades, and symphonies, the vulgar may enjoy and believe in—but where he finds nothing real but the saltpetre, pasteboard, and catgut. His book may be regarded as the ultimatum of mechanical metaphysics in our time; a remarkable realization of what in Martinus Scriblerus was still only an idea, that ‘as the jack had a meat-roasting quality, so had the body a thinking quality,’—upon the strength of which the Nurembergers were to build a wood and leather man, ‘who should reason as well as most country parsons.’ Vaucasson did indeed make a wooden duck, that seemed to eat and digest; but that bold scheme of the Nurembergers remained for a more modern virtuoso.

This condition of the two great departments of knowledge; the outward, cultivated exclusively on mechanical principles—the inward finally abandoned, because, cultivated on such principles, it is found to yield no result—sufficiently indicates the intellectual bias of our time, its all-pervading disposition towards that line of inquiry. In fact, an inward persuasion has long been diffusing itself, and now and then even comes to utterance, that except the external, there are no true sciences; that to the inward world (if there be any) our only conceivable road is through the outward; that, in short, what cannot be investigated and understood mechanically, cannot be investigated and understood at all. We advert the more particularly to these intellectual propensities, as to prominent symptoms of our age; because Opinion is at all times doubly related to Action, first as cause, then as effect; and the speculative tendency of any age, will therefore give us, on the whole, the best indications of its practical tendency.

Nowhere, for example, is the deep, almost exclusive faith, we have in Mechanism, more visible than in the Politics of this time. Civil government does, by its nature, include much that is mechanical, and must be treated accordingly. We term it, indeed, in ordinary language, the Machine of Society, and talk of it as the grand working wheel from which all private machines must derive, or to which they must adapt, their movements. Considered merely as a metaphor, all this is well enough; but here, as in so many other cases, the ‘foam hardens itself into a shell,’ and the shadow we have wantonly evoked stands terrible before us, and will not depart at our bidding. Government includes much also that is not mechanical, and cannot be treated mechanically; of which latter truth, as appears to us, the political speculations and exertions of our time are taking less and less cognizance.

Nay, in the very outset, we might note the mighty interest taken in *mere political arrangements*, as itself the sign of a mechanical age. The whole discontent of Europe takes this direction. The deep, strong cry

of all civilized nations — a cry which, every one now sees, must and will be answered, is, Give us a reform of Government! A good structure of legislation — a proper check upon the executive — a wise arrangement of the judiciary, is *all* that is wanting for human happiness. The Philosopher of this age is not a Socrates, a Plato, a Hooker, or Taylor, who inculcates on men the necessity and infinite worth of moral goodness, the great truth that our happiness depends on the mind which is within us, and not on the circumstances which are without us; but a Smith, a De Lolme, a Bentham, who chiefly inculcates the reverse of this—that our happiness depends entirely on external circumstances; nay, that the strength and dignity of the mind within us is itself the creature and consequence of these. Were the laws, the government, in good order, all were well with us; the rest would care for itself! Dissentients from this opinion, expressed or implied, are now rarely to be met with; widely and angrily as men differ in its application, the principle is admitted by all.

Equally mechanical, and of equal simplicity, are the methods proposed by both parties for completing or securing this all-sufficient perfection of arrangement. It is no longer the moral, religious, spiritual condition of the people that is our concern, but their physical, practical, economical condition, as regulated by public laws. Thus is the Body-politic more than ever worshipped and tended: but the Soul-politic less than ever. Love of country, in any high or generous sense, in any other than an almost animal sense, or mere habit, has little importance attached to it in such reforms, or in the opposition shown them. Men are to be guided only by their self-interests. Good government is a good balancing of these, and, except a keen eye and appetite for self-interest, requires no virtue in any quarter. To both parties it is emphatically a machine: to the discontented, a ‘taxing-machine;’ to the contented, a ‘machine for securing property.’ Its duties and its faults are not those of a father, but of an active parish constable.

Thus it is by the mere condition of the machine; by preserving it untouched, or else by re-constructing it, and oiling it anew, that man’s salvation as a social being is to be insured and indefinitely promoted. Contrive the fabric of law aright, and without farther effort on your part, that divine spirit of freedom, which all hearts venerate and long for, will of herself come to inhabit it; and under her healing wings every noxious influence will wither, every good and salutary one more and more expand. Nay, so devoted are we to this principle, and at the same time so curiously mechanical, that a new trade, specially grounded on it, has arisen among us, under the name of ‘Codification,’ or code-making in the abstract; whereby any people, for a reasonable consideration, may be accommodated with a patent code—more easily than curious individuals with patent breeches, for the people does *not* need to be measured first.

To us who live in the midst of all this, and see continually the faith, hope, and practice of every one founded on Mechanism of one kind or other, it is apt to seem quite natural, and as if it could never have been otherwise. Nevertheless, if we recollect or reflect a little, we shall find both that it has been, and might again be, otherwise. The domain of Mechanism, — meaning thereby political, ecclesiastical, or other outward establishments, — was once considered as embracing, and we are persuaded can at any time embrace, but a limited portion of man’s interests, and by no means the highest portion.

To speak a little pedantically, there is a science of *Dynamics* in man's fortunes and nature, as well as of *Meehanics*. There is a science which treats of, and practically addresses, the primary, unmodified forces and energies of man, the mysterious springs of Love, and Fear, and Wonder, of Enthusiasm, Poetry, Religion, all which have a truly vital and *infinite* character; as well as a science which practically addresses the finite, modified developments of these, when they take the shape of immediate 'motives,' as hope of reward, or as fear of punishment.

Now it is certain, that in former times the wise men, the enlightened lovers of their kind, who appeared generally as Moralists, Poets, or Priests, did, without neglecting the Mechanical province, deal chiefly with the Dynamical; applying themselves chiefly to regulate, increase, and purify the inward primary powers of man; and fancying that herein lay the main difficulty, and the best service they could undertake. But a wide difference is manifest in our age. For the wise men, who now appear as Political Philosophers, deal exclusively with the Mechanical province, and, occupying themselves in counting up and estimating men's motives, strive, by curious checking and balancing, and other adjustments of Profit and Loss, to guide them to their true advantage: while, unfortunately, those same 'motives' are so innumerable, and so variable in every individual, that no really useful conclusion can ever be drawn from their enumeration. But though Mechanism, wisely contrived, has done much for man, in a social and moral point of view, we cannot be persuaded that it has ever been the chief source of his worth or happiness. Consider the great elements of human enjoyment, the attainments and possessions that exalt man's life to its present height, and see what part of these he owes to institutions, to Mechanism of any kind; and what to the instinctive, unbounded force, which Nature herself lent him, and still continues to him. Shall we say, for example, that Science and Art are indebted principally to the founders of Schools and Universities? Did not Science originate rather, and gain advancement, in the obscure closets of the Roger Bacons, Keplers, Newtons; in the workshops of the Fausts and the Watts — wherever, and in what guise soever Nature, from the first times downwards, had sent a gifted spirit upon the earth? Again, were Homer and Shakespeare members of any beneficed guild, or made Poets by means of it? Was Painting and Sculpture created by forethought, brought into the world by institutions for that end? No; Science and Art have, from first to last, been the free gift of Nature; an unsolicited, unexpected gift — often even a fatal one. These things rose up, as it were, by spontaneous growth, in the free soil and sunshine of Nature. They were not planted or grafted, nor even greatly multiplied or improved by the culture or manuring of institutions. Generally speaking, they have derived only partial help from these; often enough have suffered damage. They made constitutions for themselves. They originated in the Dynamical nature of man, not in his Mechanical nature.

Or, to take an infinitely higher instance, that of the Christian Religion, which, under every theory of it, in the believing or the unbelieving mind, must ever be regarded as the crowning glory, or rather the life and soul, of our whole modern culture. How did Christianity arise and spread abroad among men? Was it by institutions and establishments, and well-arranged systems of mechanism? Not so: on the contrary, in all past and existing institutions for those ends, its divine

spirit has invariably been found to languish and decay. It arose in the mystic deeps of man's soul; and was spread abroad by the 'preaching of the word,' by simple, altogether natural and individual efforts; and flew, like hallowed fire, from heart to heart, till all were purified and illuminated by it; and its heavenly light shone, as it still shines, and as sun or star will ever shine, through the whole dark destinies of man. Here again was no Mechanism; man's highest attainment was accomplished, Dynamically, not Mechanically. Nay, we will venture to say that no high attainment, not even any far-extending movement among men, was ever accomplished otherwise. Strange as it may seem, if we read History with any degree of thoughtfulness, we shall find that the checks and balances of Profit and Loss have never been the grand agents with men; that they have never been roused into deep, thorough, all-pervading efforts, by any computable prospect of Profit and Loss, for any visible, finite object; but always for some invisible and infinite one. The Crusades took their rise in Religion; their visible object was, commercially speaking, worth nothing. It was the boundless, Invisible world that was laid bare in the imaginations of those men; and in its burning light, the visible shrunk as a scroll. Not mechanical, nor produced by mechanical means, was this vast movement. No dining at Freemasons' Tavern, with the other long train of modern machinery; no cunning reconciliation of 'vested interests,' was required here: only the passionate voice of one man, the rapt soul looking through the eyes of one man; and rugged, steel-clad Europe trembled beneath his words, and followed him whither he listed. In later ages, it was still the same. The Reformation had an invisible, mystic, and ideal aim: the result was indeed to be embodied in external things; but its spirit, its worth, was internal, invisible, infinite. Our English Revolution, too, originated in Religion. Men did battle, even in those days, not for Purse sake, but for Conscience sake. Nay, in our own days, it is no way different. The French Revolution itself had something higher in it than cheap bread and a Habeas-corpus act. Here, too, was an Idea; a Dynamic, not a Mechanic force. It was a struggle, though a blind and at last an insane one, for the infinite, divine nature of Right, of Freedom, of Country.

Thus does man, in every age, vindicate, consciously or unconsciously, his celestial birthright. Thus does nature hold on her wondrous, unquestionable course; and all our systems and theories are but so many froth-eddies or sand-banks, which from time to time she casts up and washes away. When we can drain the Ocean into our mill-ponds, and bottle up the Force of Gravity, to be sold by retail, in our gas-jars, then may we hope to comprehend the infinitudes of man's soul under formulas of Profit and Loss; and rule over this too, as over a patent engine, by checks, and valves, and balances.

Nay, even with regard to Government itself, can it be necessary to remind any one that Freedom, without which indeed all spiritual life is impossible, depends on infinitely more complex influences than either the extension or the curtailment of the 'democratic interest?' Who is there that 'taking the high *priori* road,' shall point out what these influences are; what deep, subtle, inextricably entangled influences they have been, and may be? For man is not the creature and product of Mechanism; but, in a far truer sense, its creator and producer: it is the noble people that makes the noble Government; rather than conversely. On the whole, Institutions are much; but

they are not all. The freest and highest spirits of the world have often been found under strange outward circumstances: Saint Paul and his brother Apostles were politically slaves: Epictetus was personally one. Again, forget the influences of Chivalry and Religion, and ask, — what countries produced Columbus and Las Casas? Or, descending from virtue and heroism, to mere energy and spiritual talent: Cortes, Pizarro, Alba, Ximenes? The Spaniards of the sixteenth century were indisputably the noblest nation of Europe; yet they had the Inquisition, and Philip II. They have the same government at this day; and are the lowest nation. The Dutch, too, have retained their old constitution; but no Siege of Leyden, no William the Silent, not even an Egmont or De Witt, any longer appear among them. With ourselves, also, where much has changed, effect has nowise followed cause, as it should have done: two centuries ago, the Commons' Speaker addressed Queen Elizabeth on bended knees, happy that the virago's foot did not even smite him; yet the people were then governed, not by a Castlereagh, but by a Burghley; they had their Shakespeare and Philip Sidney, where we have our Sheridan Knowles and Beau Brummel.

These and the like facts are so familiar, the truths which they preach so obvious, and have in all past times been so universally believed and acted on, that we should almost feel ashamed for repeating them, were it not that, on every hand, the memory of them seems to have passed away, or at best died into a faint tradition, of no value as a practical principle. To judge by the loud clamour of our Constitution-builders, Statists, Economists, directors, creators, reformers of Public Societies; in a word, all manner of Mechanists, from the Cartwright up to the Code-maker, and by the nearly total silence of all Preachers and Teachers who should give a voice to Poetry, Religion, and Morality, we might fancy either that man's Dynamical nature was, to all spiritual intents, extinct, or else so perfected, that nothing more was to be made of it by the old means; and henceforth only in his Mechanical contrivances did any hope exist for him.

To define the limits of these two departments of man's activity, which work into one another, and by means of one another, so intricately and inseparably, were, by its nature, an impossible attempt. Their relative importance, even to the wisest mind, will vary in different times, according to the special wants and dispositions of these times. Meanwhile, it seems clear enough that only in the right co-ordination of the two, and the vigorous forwarding of *both*, does our true line of action lie. Undue cultivation of the inward or Dynamical province leads to idle, visionary, impracticable courses, and especially, in rude eras, to Superstition and Fanaticism, with their long train of baleful and well-known evils. Undue cultivation of the outward, again, though less immediately prejudicial, and even for the time productive of many palpable benefits, must, in the long run, by destroying Moral Force, which is the parent of all other Force, prove not less certainly, and perhaps still more hopelessly, pernicious. This, we take it, is the grand characteristic of our age. By our skill in Mechanism, it has come to pass that, in the management of external things, we excel all other ages; while in whatever respects the pure moral nature, in true dignity of soul and character, we are perhaps inferior to most civilized ages.

In fact, if we look deeper, we shall find that this faith in Mechanism

has now struck its roots deep into men's most intimate, primary sources of conviction ; and is thence sending up, over his whole life and activity, innumerable stems — fruit-bearing and poison-bearing. The truth is, men have lost their belief in the Invisible, and believe, and hope, and work only in the Visible ; or, to speak it in other words, This is not a Religious age. Only the material, the immediately practical, not the divine and spiritual, is important to us. The infinite, absolute character of Virtue has passed into a finite, conditional one ; it is no longer a worship of the Beautiful and Good ; but a calculation of the Profitable. Worship, indeed, in any sense, is not recognised among us, or is mechanically explained into Fear of pain, or Hope of pleasure. Our true Deity is Mechanism. It has subdued external Nature for us, and, we think, it will do all other things. We are Giants in physical power : in a deeper than a metaphorical sense, we are Titans, that strive, by heaping mountain on mountain, to conquer Heaven also.

The strong mechanical character, so visible in the spiritual pursuits and methods of this age, may be traced much farther into the condition and prevailing disposition of our spiritual nature itself. Consider, for example, the general fashion of Intellect in this era. Intellect, the power man has of knowing and believing, is now nearly synonymous with Logic, or the mere power of arranging and communicating. Its implement is not Meditation, but Argument. 'Cause and effect' is almost the only category under which we look at, and work with, all Nature. Our first question with regard to any object is not, What is it ? but, How is it ? We are no longer instinctively driven to apprehend, and lay to heart, what is Good and Lovely, but rather to inquire, as onlookers, how it is produced, whence it comes, whither it goes ? Our favourite Philosophers have no love and no hatred ; they stand among us, not to do or to create any thing, but as a sort of Logic-mills to grind out the true causes and effects of all that is done and created. To the eye of a Smith, a Hume, or a Constant, all is well that works quietly. An Order of Ignatius Loyola, a Presbyterianism of John Knox, a Wickliffe, or a Henry the Eighth, are simply so many mechanical phenomena, caused or causing.

The *Euphuist* of our day differs much from his pleasant predecessors. An intellectual dapperling of these times boasts chiefly of his irresistible perspicacity, his 'dwelling in the daylight of truth,' and so forth ; which, on examination, turns out to be a dwelling in the *rush*-light of 'closet-logic,' and a deep unconsciousness that there is any other light to dwell in, or any other objects to survey with it. Wonder, indeed, is, on all hands, dying out : it is the sign of uncultivation to wonder. Speak to any small man of a high, majestic Reformation, of a high, majestic Luther to lead it, and forthwith he sets about 'accounting' for it ! how the 'circumstances of the time' called for such a character, and found him, we suppose, standing girt and road-ready, to do its errand ; how the 'circumstances of the time' created, fashioned, floated him quietly along into the result ; how, in short, this small man, had he been there, could have performed the like himself ! For it is the 'force of circumstances' that does every thing ; the force of one man can do nothing. Now all this is grounded on little more than a metaphor. We figure Society as a 'Machine,' and that mind is opposed to mind, as body is to body ; whereby two, or at most ten, little minds must be stronger than one great mind. Notable absurdity ! For the plain truth, very plain, we think, is, that minds are opposed to

minds in quite a different way ; and *one* man that has a higher Wisdom, a hitherto unknown spiritual Truth in him, is stronger, not than ten men that have it not, or than ten thousand, but than *all* men, that have it not ; and stands among them with a quite ethereal, angelic power, as with a sword out of Heaven's own armoury, sky-tempered, which no buckler, and no tower of brass, will finally withstand.

But to us, in these times, such considerations rarely occur. We enjoy, we see nothing by direct vision ; but only by reflection, and in anatomical dismemberment. Like Sir Hudibras, for every *Why* we must have a *Wherefore*. We have our little *theory* on all human and divine things. Poetry, the workings of genius itself, which in all times, with one or another meaning, has been called Inspiration, and held to be mysterious and inscrutable, is no longer without its scientific exposition. The building of the lofty rhyme is like any other masonry or bricklaying : we have theories of its rise, height, decline, and fall — which latter, it would seem, is now near, among all people. Of our 'Theories of Taste,' as they are called, wherein the deep, infinite, unspeakable Love of Wisdom and Beauty, which dwells in all men, is 'explained,' made mechanically visible, from 'Association,' and the like, why should we say any thing ? Hume has written us a 'Natural History of Religion ;' in which one Natural History all the rest are included. Strangely, too, does the general feeling coincide with Hume's in this wonderful problem ; for whether his 'Natural History' be the right one or not, that Religion must have a Natural History, all of us, cleric and laic, seem to be agreed. He indeed regards it as a Disease ; we again as Health ; so far there is a difference ; but in our first principle we are at one.

To what extent theological Unbelief, we mean intellectual dissent from the Church in its view of Holy Writ, prevails at this day, would be a highly important, were it not, under any circumstances, an almost impossible inquiry. But the Unbelief, which is of a still more fundamental character, every man may see prevailing, with scarcely any but the faintest contradiction, all around him ; even in the Pulpit itself. Religion, in most countries, more or less in every country, is no longer what it was, and should be — a thousand-voiced psalm from the heart of Man to his invisible Father, the fountain of all Goodness, Beauty, Truth, and revealed in every revelation of these ; but for the most part, a wise prudential feeling grounded on mere calculation ; a matter, as all others now are, of Expediency and Utility, whereby some smaller quantum of earthly enjoyment may be exchanged for a far larger quantum of celestial enjoyment. Thus Religion, too, is Profit ; a working for wages ; not Reverence, but vulgar Hope or Fear. Many, we know, very many, we hope, are still religious in a far different sense ; were it not so, our case were too desperate : but to witness that such is the temper of the times, we take any calm observant man, who agrees or disagrees in our feeling on the matter, and ask him whether our *view* of it is not in general well-founded.

Literature, too, if we consider it, gives similar testimony. At no former era has Literature, the printed communication of Thought, been of such importance as it is now. We often hear that the Church is in danger ; and truly so it is — in a danger it seems not to know of ; for, with its tithes in the most perfect safety, its functions are becoming more and more superseded. The true Church of England, at this moment, lies in the Editors of its Newspapers. These preach to the peo-

ple daily, weekly; admonishing kings themselves; advising peace or war, with an authority which only the first Reformers, and a long-past class of Popes, were possessed of; inflicting moral censure; imparting moral encouragement, consolation, edification; in all ways, diligently 'administering the Discipline of the Church.' It may be said, too, that in private disposition, the new Preachers somewhat resemble the Mendicant Friars of old times; outwardly full of holy zeal; inwardly not without stratagem, and hunger for terrestrial things. But omitting this class, and the boundless host of watery personages who pipe, as they are able, on so many scannel straws, let us look at the higher regions of Literature, where, if anywhere, the pure melodies of Poesy and Wisdom should be heard. Of natural talent there is no deficiency: one or two richly-endowed individuals even give us a superiority in this respect. But what is the song they sing? Is it a tone of the Memnon Statue, breathing music as the *light* first touches it? a 'liquid wisdom,' disclosing to our sense the deep, infinite harmonies of Nature and man's soul? Alas, no! It is not a matin or vesper hymn to the Spirit of all Beauty, but a fierce clashing of cymbals, and shouting of multitudes, as children pass through the fire to Moloch! Poetry itself has no eye for the Invisible. Beauty is no longer the god it worships, but some brute image of Strength, which we may well call an idol, for true Strength is one and the same with Beauty, and its worship also is a hymn. The meek, silent Light can mould, create, and purify all nature; but the loud Whirlwind, the sign and product of Disunion, of Weakness, passes on, and is forgotten. How widely this veneration for the physically Strongest has spread itself through Literature, any one may judge, who reads either criticism or poem. We praise a work, not as 'true,' but as 'strong;' our highest praise is that it has 'affected' us, has 'terrified' us. All this, it has been well observed, is the 'maximum of the Barbarous,' the symptom, not of vigorous refinement, but of luxurious corruption. It speaks much, too, for men's indestructible love of truth, that nothing of this kind will abide with them; that even the talent of a Byron cannot permanently seduce us into idol-worship; but that he, too, with all his wild syren charming, already begins to be disregarded and forgotten.

Again, with respect to our Moral condition: here also, he who runs may read that the same physical, mechanical influences, are everywhere busy. For the 'superior morality,' of which we hear so much, we, too, would desire to be thankful: at the same time, it were but blindness to deny that this 'superior morality' is properly rather an 'inferior criminality,' produced not by greater love of Virtue, but by greater perfection of Police; and of that far subtler and stronger Police, called Public Opinion. This last watches over us with its Argus eyes more keenly than ever; but the 'inward eye' seems heavy with sleep. Of any belief in invisible, divine things, we find as few traces in our Morality as elsewhere. It is by tangible, material considerations, that we are guided, not by inward and spiritual. Self-denial, the parent of all virtue, in any true sense of that word, has perhaps seldom been rarer: so rare is it, that the most, even in their abstract speculations, regard its existence as a chimera. Virtue is Pleasure, is Profit; no celestial, but an earthly thing. Virtuous men, Philanthropists, Martyrs, are happy accidents; their 'taste' lies the right way! In all senses, we worship and follow after Power, which may be called a

physical pursuit. No man now loves Truth, as Truth must be loved, with an infinite love; but only with a finite love, and as it were *par amours*. Nay, properly speaking, he does not *believe* and know it, but only ‘*thinks*’ it, and that ‘there is every probability!’ He preaches it aloud, and rushes courageously forth with it — if there is a multitude huzzaing at his back! yet ever keeps looking over his shoulder, and the instant the huzzaing languishes, he too stops short. In fact, what morality we have takes the shape of Ambition, of Honour; beyond money and money’s worth, our only rational blessedness is Popularity. It were but a fool’s trick to die for conscience. Only for ‘character,’ by duel, or, in case of extremity, by suicide, is the wise man bound to die. By arguing on the ‘force of circumstances,’ we have argued away all force from ourselves; and stand leashed together, uniform in dress and movement, like the rowers of some boundless galley. This and that may be right and true; *but* we must not do it. Wonderful ‘Force of Public Opinion!’ We must act and walk in all points as it prescribes; follow the traffic it bids us, realize the sum of money, the degree of ‘influence’ it expects of us, *or* we shall be lightly esteemed; certain mouthfuls of articulate wind will be blown at us, and this what mortal courage can front? Thus, while civil Liberty is more and more secured to us, our moral Liberty is all but lost. Practically considered, our creed is Fatalism; and, free in hand and foot, we are shackled in heart and soul, with far straiter than feudal chains. Truly may we say, with the Philosopher, ‘the deep meaning of the Laws of Mechanism lies heavy on us,’ and in the closet, in the market-place, in the temple, by the social hearth, encumbers the whole movements of our mind, and over our noblest faculties is spreading a nightmare sleep.

These dark features, we are aware, belong more or less to other ages, as well as to ours. This faith in Mechanism, in the all-importance of physical things, is in every age the common refuge of Weakness and blind Discontent; of all who believe, as many will ever do, that man’s true good lies without him, not within. We are aware also, that, as applied to ourselves in all their aggravation, they form but half a picture; that in the whole picture there are bright lights as well as gloomy shadows. If we here dwell chiefly on the latter, let us not be blamed; it is in general more profitable to reckon up our defects than to boast of our attainments.

Neither, with all these evils more or less clearly before us, have we at any time despaired of the fortunes of society. Despair, or even despondency, in that respect, appears to us, in all cases, a groundless feeling. We have a faith in the imperishable dignity of man; in the high vocation to which, throughout this his earthly history, he has been appointed. However it may be with individual nations, whatever melancholic speculators may assert, it seems a well-ascertained fact that, in all times, reckoning even from those of the Heraclides and Pelasgi, the happiness and greatness of mankind at large has been continually progressive. Doubtless this age also is advancing. Its very unrest, its ceaseless activity, its discontent, contains matter of promise. Knowledge, education, are opening the eyes of the humblest — are increasing the number of thinking minds without limit. This is as it should be; for, not in turning back, not in resting, but only in resolutely struggling forward, does our life consist. Nay, after all, our spiritual maladies are but of Opinion; we are but fettered by chains of our

own forging, and which ourselves also can rend asunder. This deep, paralysed subjection to physical objects comes not from nature, but from our own unwise mode of *viewing* Nature. Neither can we understand that man wants, at this hour, any faculty of heart, soul, or body, that ever belonged to him. ‘He who has been born, has been a First Man;’ has had lying before his young eyes, and as yet unhardened into scientific shapes, a world as plastic, infinite, divine, as lay before the eyes of Adam himself. If Mechanism, like some glass bell, encircles and imprisons us, if the soul looks forth on a fair heavenly country which it cannot reach, and pines, and in its scanty atmosphere is ready to perish — yet the bell is but of glass; ‘one bold stroke to break the bell ‘in pieces, and thou art delivered!’ Not the invisible world is wanting, for it dwells in man’s soul, and this last is still here. Are the solemn temples, in which the Divinity was once visibly revealed among us, crumbling away? We can repair them, we can rebuild them. The wisdom, the heroic worth of our forefathers, which we have lost, we can recover. That admiration of old nobleness, which now so often shows itself as a faint *dilettantism*, will one day become a generous emulation, and man may again be all that he has been, and more than he has been. Nor are these the mere daydreams of fancy — they are clear possibilities; nay, in this time they are even assuming the character of hopes. Indications we do see, in other countries and in our own, signs infinitely cheering to us, that Mechanism is not always to be our hard taskmaster, but one day to be our pliant, all-ministering servant; that a new and brighter spiritual era is slowly evolving itself for all men. But on these things our present course forbids us to enter.

Meanwhile, that great outward changes are in progress can be doubtful to no one. The time is sick and out of joint. Many things have reached their height; and it is a wise adage that tells us, ‘the darkest hour is nearest the dawn.’ Whenever we can gather any indication of the public thought, whether from printed books, as in France or Germany, or from Carbonari rebellions and other political tumults, as in Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece, the voice it utters is the same. The thinking minds of all nations call for change. There is a deep-lying struggle in the whole fabric of society, — a boundless, grinding collision of the new with the old. The French Revolution, as is now visible enough, was not the parent of this mighty movement, but its offspring. Those two hostile influences which always exist in human things, and on the constant intercommunion of which depends their health and safety, had lain in separate masses, accumulating through generations, and France was the scene of their fiercest explosion. But the final issue was not unfolded in that country; nay, it is not yet anywhere unfolded. Political freedom is hitherto the object of these efforts; but they will not and cannot stop there. It is towards a higher freedom than mere freedom from oppression by his fellow mortal that man dimly aims. Of this higher, heavenly freedom, which is ‘man’s ‘reasonable service,’ all his noble institutions, his faithful endeavours, and loftiest attainments, are but the body, and more and more approximated emblem.

On the whole, as this wondrous planet Earth is journeying with its fellows through infinite space, so are the wondrous destinies embarked on it journeying through infinite time, under a higher guidance than

ours. For the present, as our astronomy informs us, its path lies towards *Hercules*, the constellation of *Physical Power*. But that is not our most pressing concern. Go where it will, the deep HEAVEN will be around it. Therein let us have hope and sure faith. To reform a world, to reform a nation, no wise man will undertake; and all but foolish men know that the only solid, though a far slower reformation, is what each begins and perfects on *himself*.

SOUTHEY'S COLLOQUIES ON SOCIETY.*

IT would be scarcely possible for a man of Mr. Southey's talents and acquirements to write two volumes, so large as those before us, which should be wholly destitute of information and amusement. Yet we do not remember to have read with so little satisfaction any equal quantity of matter, written by any man of real abilities. We have, for some time past, observed with great regret the strange infatuation which leads the Poet-laureate to abandon those departments of literature in which he might excel, and to lecture the public on sciences of which he has still the very alphabet to learn. He has now, we think, done his worst. The subject which he has at last undertaken to treat is one which demands all the highest intellectual and moral qualities of a philosophical statesman, — an understanding at once comprehensive and acute, — a heart at once upright and charitable. Mr. Southey brings to the task two faculties which were never, we believe, vouchsafed in measure so copious to any human being, — the faculty of believing without a reason, and the faculty of hating without a provocation.

It is, indeed, most extraordinary that a mind like Mr. Southey's, — a mind richly endowed in many respects by nature, and highly cultivated by study, — a mind which has exercised considerable influence on the most enlightened generation of the most enlightened people that ever existed — should be utterly destitute of the power of discerning truth from falsehood. Yet such is the fact. Government is to Mr. Southey one of the fine arts. He judges of a theory or a public measure, of a religion, a political party, a peace or a war, as men judge of a picture or a statue, by the effect produced on his imagination. A chain of associations is to him what a chain of reasoning is to other men; and what he calls his opinions are, in fact, merely his tastes.

Part of this description might perhaps apply to a much greater man, Mr. Burke. But Mr. Burke, assuredly, possessed an understanding admirably fitted for the investigation of truth, — an understanding stronger than that of any statesman, active or speculative, of the eighteenth century, — stronger than every thing, except his own fierce and ungovernable sensibility. Hence, he generally chose his side like a fanatic, and defended it like a philosopher. His conduct in the most important events of his life, — at the time of the impeachment of Hastings, for

* Sir Thomas More; or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society. By Robert Southey, Esq., LL.D., Poet Laureate. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1829. — Vol. 1. page 528. January, 1830.

example, and at the time of the French Revolution,— seems to have been prompted by those feelings and motives which Mr. Coleridge has so happily described :

‘ Stormy pity, and the cherish’d lure
Of pomp, and proud precipitance of soul.’

Hindustan, with its vast cities, its gorgeous pagodas, its infinite swarms of dusky population, its long-descended dynasties, its stately etiquette, excited in a mind so capacious, so imaginative, and so susceptible, the most intense interest. The peculiarities of the costume, of the manners, and of the laws, the very mystery which hung over the language and origin of the people, seized his imagination. To plead in Westminster Hall, in the name of the English people, at the bar of the English nobles, for great nations and kings separated from him by half the world, seemed to him the height of human glory. Again, it is not difficult to perceive that his hostility to the French Revolution principally arose from the vexation which he felt at having all his old political associations disturbed, at seeing the well-known boundary marks of states obliterated, and the names and distinctions with which the history of Europe had been filled for ages swept away. He felt like an antiquarian, whose shield had been scoured, or a connoisseur, who found his Titian retouched. But however he came by an opinion, he had no sooner got it than he did his best to make out a legitimate title to it. His reason, like a spirit in the service of an enchanter, though spell-bound, was still mighty. It did whatever work his passions and his imagination might impose. But it did that work, however arduous, with marvellous dexterity and vigour. His course was not determined by argument; but he could defend the wildest course by arguments more plausible than those by which common men support opinions which they have adopted after the fullest deliberation. Reason has scarcely ever displayed, even in those well-constituted minds of which she occupies the throne, so much power and energy as in the lowest offices of that imperial servitude.

Now, in the mind of Mr. Southey reason has no place at all, as either leader or follower, as either sovereign or slave. He does not seem to know what an argument is. He never uses arguments himself. He never troubles himself to answer the arguments of his opponents. It has never occurred to him that a man ought to be able to give some better account of the way in which he has arrived at his opinions than merely that it is his will and pleasure to hold them,— that there is a difference between assertion and demonstration,— that a rumour does not always prove a fact,— that a fact does not always prove a theory,— that two contradictory propositions cannot be undeniable truths,— that to beg the question is not the way to settle it,— or that, when an objection is raised, it ought to be met with something more convincing than ‘ scoundrel’ and ‘ blockhead.’

It would be absurd to read the works of such a writer for political instruction. The utmost that can be expected from any system promulgated by him is that it may be splendid and affecting,— that it may suggest sublime and pleasing images. His scheme of philosophy is a mere day-dream, a poetical creation, like the Domdaniel caverns, the Swerga, or Padalon; and, indeed, it bears no inconsiderable resemblance to those gorgeous visions. Like them, it has something of invention, grandeur, and brilliancy; but, like them, it is grotesque and

extravagant, and perpetually violates that conventional probability which is essential to the effect even of works of art.

The warmest admirers of Mr. Southey will scarcely, we think, deny that his success has almost always borne an inverse proportion to the degree in which his undertakings have required a logical head. His poems, taken in the mass, stand far higher than his prose works. The Laureate Odes, indeed, among which the Vision of Judgment must be classed, are, for the most part, worse than Pye's, and as bad as Cibber's; nor do we think him generally happy in short pieces. But his longer poems, though full of faults, are nevertheless very extraordinary productions. We doubt greatly whether they will be read fifty years hence; but that, if they are read, they will be admired, we have no doubt whatever.

But though in general we prefer Mr. Southey's poetry to his prose, we must make one exception. The Life of Nelson is, beyond all doubt, the most perfect and the most delightful of his works. The fact is, as his poems most abundantly prove, that he is by no means so skilful in designing as in filling up. It was therefore an advantage to him to be furnished with an outline of characters and events, and to have no other task to perform than that of touching the cold sketch into life. No writer, perhaps, ever lived whose talents so precisely qualified him to write the history of the great naval warrior. There were no fine riddles of the human heart to read — no theories to found — no hidden causes to develope — no remote consequences to predict. The character of the hero lay on the surface. The exploits were brilliant and picturesque. The necessity of adhering to the real course of events saved Mr. Southey from those faults which deform the original plan of almost every one of his poems, and which even his innumerable beauties of detail scarcely redeem. The subject did not require the exercise of those reasoning powers the want of which is the blemish of his prose. It would not be easy to find, in all literary history, an instance of a more exact hit between wind and water. John Wesley, and the Peninsular War, were subjects of a very different kind, — subjects which required all the qualities of a philosophic historian. In Mr. Southey's works on these subjects, he has, on the whole, failed. Yet there are charming specimens of the art of narration in both of them. The Life of Wesley will probably live. Defective as it is, it contains the only popular account of a most remarkable moral revolution, and of a man whose eloquence and logical acuteness might have rendered him eminent in literature, whose genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu, and who, whatever his errors may have been, devoted all his powers, in defiance of obloquy and derision, to what he sincerely considered as the highest good of his species. The History of the Peninsular War is already dead: indeed, the second volume was dead-born. The glory of producing an imperishable record of that great conflict seems to be reserved for Colonel Napier.

The Book of the Church contains some stories very prettily told. The rest is mere rubbish. The adventure was manifestly one which could be achieved only by a profound thinker, and in which even a profound thinker might have failed, unless his passions had been kept under strict control. In all those works in which Mr. Southey has completely abandoned narration, and undertaken to argue moral and political questions, his failure has been complete and ignominious. On such occasions, his writings are rescued from utter contempt and deri-

sion solely by the beauty and purity of the English. We find, we confess, so great a charm in Mr. Southey's style, that, even when he writes nonsense, we generally read it with pleasure, except, indeed, when he tries to be droll. A more insufferable jester never existed. He very often attempts to be humorous, and yet we do not remember a single occasion on which he has succeeded farther than to be quaintly and flippantly dull. In one of his works he tells us that Bishop Sprat was very properly so called, inasmuch as he was a very small poet. And, in the book now before us, he cannot quote Francis Bugg without a remark on his unsavoury name. A man might talk folly like this by his own fireside; but that any human being, after having made such a joke, should write it down, and copy it out, and transmit it to the printer, and correct the proof-sheets, and send it forth into the world, is enough to make us ashamed of our species.

The extraordinary bitterness of spirit which Mr. Southey manifests towards his opponents is, no doubt, in a great measure to be attributed to the manner in which he forms his opinions. Differences of taste, it has often been remarked, produce greater exasperation than differences on points of science. But this is not all. A peculiar austerity marks almost all Mr. Southey's judgments of men and actions. We are far from blaming him for fixing on a high standard of morals, and for applying that standard to every case. But rigour ought to be accompanied by discernment; and of discernment Mr. Southey seems to be utterly destitute. His mode of judging is monkish: it is exactly what we should expect from a stern old Benedictine who had been preserved from many ordinary frailties by the restraints of his situation. No man out of a cloister ever wrote about love, for example, so coldly, and at the same time so grossly. His descriptions of it are just what we should hear from a recluse, who knew the passion only from the details of the confessional. Almost all his heroes make love either like seraphim or like cattle. He seems to have no notion of any thing between the Platonic passion of the Glendoveer, who gazes with rapture on his mistress's leprosy, and the brutal appetite of Arvalan and Roderick. In Roderick, indeed, the two characters are united. He is first all clay, and then all spirit: he goes forth a Tarquin, and comes back too ethereal to be married. The only love scene, as far as we can recollect, in *Madoc*, consists of the delicate attentions which a savage, who has drunk too much of the Prince's metheglin, offers to Goervyl. It would be the labour of a week to find, in all the vast mass of Mr. Southey's poetry, a single passage indicating any sympathy with those feelings which have consecrated the shades of *Vaucluse* and the rocks of *Meillerie*.

Indeed, if we except some very pleasing images of paternal tenderness and filial duty, there is scarcely any thing soft or humane in Mr. Southey's poetry. What theologians call the spiritual sins are his cardinal virtues — hatred, pride, and the insatiable thirst of vengeance. These passions he disguises under the name of duties; he purifies them from the alloy of vulgar interests; he ennobles them by uniting them with energy, fortitude, and a severe sanctity of manners, and then holds them up to the admiration of mankind. This is the spirit of *Thalaba*, of *Ladurlad*, of *Adosinda*, of *Roderick* after his regeneration. It is the spirit which, in all his writings, Mr. Southey appears to affect. 'I do well to be angry,' seems to be the predominant feeling of his mind. Almost the only mark of charity which he vouchsafes to his opponents

is to pray for their conversion, and this he does in terms not unlike those in which we can imagine a Portuguese priest interceding with Heaven for a Jew delivered over to the secular arm after a relapse.

We have always heard, and fully believe, that Mr. Southey is a very amiable and humane man; nor do we intend to apply to him personally any of the remarks which we have made on the spirit of his writings. Such are the caprices of human nature. Even Uncle Toby troubled himself very little about the French grenadiers who fell on the glacis of Namur. And, when Mr. Southey takes up his pen, he changes his nature as much as Captain Shandy when he girt on his sword. The only opponents to whom he gives quarter are those in whom he finds something of his own character reflected. He seems to have an instinctive antipathy for calm, moderate men—for men who shun extremes and who render reasons. He has treated Mr. Owen of Lanark, for example, with infinitely more respect than he has shown to Mr. Hallam or to Dr. Lingard; and this for no reason that we can discover, except that Mr. Owen is more unreasonably and hopelessly in the wrong than any speculator of our time.

Mr. Southey's political system is just what we might expect from a man who regards politics, not as a matter of science, but as a matter of taste and feeling. All his schemes of government have been inconsistent with themselves. In his youth he was a republican; yet, as he tells us in his preface to these Colloquies, he was even then opposed to the Catholic claims. He is now a violent Ultra-Tory. Yet while he maintains, with vehemence approaching to ferocity, all the sterner and harsher parts of the Ultra-Tory theory of government, the baser and dirtier part of that theory disgusts him. Exclusion, persecution, severe punishments for libellers and demagogues, proscriptions, massacres, civil war, if necessary, rather than any concession to a discontented people,—these are the measures which he seems inclined to recommend. A severe and gloomy tyranny—crushing opposition—silencing remonstrance—drilling the minds of the people into unreasoning obedience,—has in it something of grandeur which delights his imagination. But there is nothing fine in the shabby tricks and jobs of office. And Mr. Southey, accordingly, has no toleration for them. When a democrat, he did not perceive that his system led logically, and would have led practically, to the removal of religious distinctions. He now commits a similar error. He renounces the abject and paltry part of the creed of his party, without perceiving that it is also an essential part of that creed. He would have tyranny and purity together; though the most superficial observation might have shown him that there can be no tyranny without corruption.

It is high time, however, that we should proceed to the consideration of the work, which is our more immediate subject, and which, indeed, illustrates in almost every page our general remarks on Mr. Southey's writings. In the preface, we are informed that the author, notwithstanding some statements to the contrary, was always opposed to the Catholic claims. We fully believe this; both because we are sure that Mr. Southey is incapable of publishing a deliberate falsehood, and because his averment is in itself probable. It is exactly what we should have expected, that, even in his wildest paroxysms of democratic enthusiasm, Mr. Southey would have felt no wish to see a simple remedy applied to a great practical evil; that the only measure which all the great statesmen of two generations have agreed with each other in

supporting, would be the only measure which Mr. Southey would have agreed with himself in opposing. He has passed from one extreme of political opinion to another, as Satan in Milton went round the globe, contriving constantly to 'ride with darkness.' Wherever the thickest shadow of the night may at any moment chance to fall, there is Mr. Southey. It is not everybody who could have so dexterously avoided blundering on the daylight in the course of a journey to the Antipodes.

Mr. Southey has not been fortunate in the plan of any of his fictitious narratives. But he has never failed so conspicuously, as in the work before us; except, indeed, in the wretched *Vision of Judgment*. In November 1817, it seems, the Laureate was sitting over his newspaper, and meditating about the death of the Princess Charlotte. An elderly person, of very dignified aspect, makes his appearance, announces himself as a stranger from a distant country, and apologises very politely for not having provided himself with letters of introduction. Mr. Southey supposes his visitor to be some American gentleman, who has come to see the lakes and the lake-poets, and accordingly proceeds to perform, with that grace which only long experience can give, all the duties which authors owe to starers. He assures his guest that some of the most agreeable visits which he has received have been from Americans, and that he knows men among them whose talents and virtues would do honour to any country. In passing, we may observe, to the honour of Mr. Southey, that, though he evidently has no liking for the American institutions, he never speaks of the people of the United States with that pitiful affectation of contempt by which some members of his party have done more than wars or tariffs can do to excite mutual enmity between two communities formed for mutual friendship. Great as the faults of his mind are, paltry spite like this has no place in it. Indeed, it is scarcely conceivable that a man of his sensibility and his imagination should look without pleasure and national pride on the vigorous and splendid youth of a great people, whose veins are filled with our blood, whose minds are nourished with our literature, and on whom is entailed the rich inheritance of our civilization, our freedom, and our glory.

But we must return to Mr. Southey's study at Keswick. The visitor informs the hospitable poet that he is not an American, but a spirit. Mr. Southey, with more frankness than civility, tells him that he is a very queer one. The stranger holds out his hand. It has neither weight nor substance. Mr. Southey upon this becomes more serious; his hair stands on end; and he adjures the spectre to tell him what he is, and why he comes. The ghost turns out to be Sir Thomas More. The traces of martyrdom, it seems, are worn in the other world, as stars and ribbands are worn in this. Sir Thomas shows the poet a red streak round his neck, brighter than a ruby, and informs him that Cranmer wears a suit of flames in paradise,—the right hand glove, we suppose, of peculiar brilliancy.

Sir Thomas pays but a short visit on this occasion, but promises to cultivate the new acquaintance which he has formed, and, after begging that his visit may be kept secret from Mrs. Southey, vanishes into air.

The rest of the book consists of conversations between Mr. Southey and the spirit about trade, currency, Catholic emancipation, periodical literature, female nunneries, butchers, snuff, book stalls, and a hundred

other subjects. Mr. Southey very hospitably takes an opportunity to lionize the ghost round the lakes, and directs his attention to the most beautiful points of view. Why a spirit was to be evoked for the purpose of talking over such matters, and seeing such sights — why the vicar of the parish, a blue-stocking from London, or an American, such as Mr. Southey supposed his aerial visitor to be, might not have done as well — we are unable to conceive. Sir Thomas tells Mr. Southey nothing about future events, and indeed absolutely disclaims the gift of prescience. He has learned to talk modern English; he has read all the new publications, and loves a jest as well as when he jested with the executioner, though we cannot say that the quality of his wit has materially improved in Paradise. His powers of reasoning, too, are by no means in as great vigour as when he sate on the woolsack; and though he boasts that he is ‘divested of all those passions which cloud the intellects and warp the understandings of men,’ we think him — we must confess — far less stoical than formerly. As to revelations, he tells Mr. Southey at the outset to expect none from him. The Laureate expresses some doubts, which assuredly will not raise him in the opinion of our modern millennarians, as to the divine authority of the Apocalypse. But the ghost preserves an impenetrable silence. As far as we remember, only one hint about the employments of disembodied spirits escapes him. He encourages Mr. Southey to hope that there is a Paradise Press, at which all the valuable publications of Mr. Murray and Mr. Colburn are reprinted as regularly as at Philadelphia; and delicately insinuates, that *Thalaba* and the *Curse of Kehama* are among the number. What a contrast does this absurd fiction present to those charming narratives which Plato and Cicero prefixed to their dialogues! What cost in machinery, yet what poverty of effect! A ghost brought in to say what any man might have said! The glorified spirit of a great statesman and philosopher dawdling, like a bilious old Nabob at a watering-place, over quarterly reviews and novels — dropping in to pay long calls — making excursions in search of the picturesque! The scene of St. George and St. Denys in the *Pucelle* is hardly more ridiculous. We know what Voltaire meant. Nobody, however, can suppose that Mr. Southey means to make game of the mysteries of a higher state of existence. The fact is, that in the work before us, in the *Vision of Judgment*, and in some of his other pieces, his mode of treating the most solemn subjects differs from that of open scoffers, only as the extravagant representations of sacred persons and things in some grotesque Italian paintings differ from the caricatures which Carlile exposes in the front of his shop. We interpret the particular act by the general character. What in the window of a convicted blasphemer we call blasphemous, we call only absurd and ill-judged in an altar-piece.

We now come to the conversations which pass between Mr. Southey and Sir Thomas More, or rather between two Southeys, equally eloquent, equally angry, equally unreasonable, and equally given to talking about what they do not understand. Perhaps we could not select a better instance of the spirit which pervades the whole book than the discussion touching butchers. These persons are represented as cast-aways, as men whose employment hebetates the faculties and hardens the heart; — not that the poet has any scruples about the use of animal food. He acknowledges that it is for the good of the animals themselves that men should feed upon them. ‘Nevertheless,’ says he,

‘ I cannot but acknowledge, like good old John Fox, that the sight of
 ‘ a slaughter house or shambles, if it does not disturb this clear con-
 ‘ viction, excites in me uneasiness and pain, as well as loathing. And
 ‘ that they produce a worse effect upon the persons employed in them,
 ‘ is a fact acknowledged by that law or custom which excludes such
 ‘ persons from sitting on juries upon cases of life and death.’

This is a fair specimen of Mr. Southey's mode of looking at all moral questions. Here is a body of men engaged in an employment, which, by his own account, is beneficial, not only to mankind, but to the very creatures on whom we feed. Yet he represents them as men who are necessarily reprobates — as men who must necessarily be reprobates, even in the most improved state of society — even, to use his own phrase, in a Christian Utopia. And what reasons are given for a judgment so directly opposed to every principle of sound and manly morality? Merely this, that he cannot abide the sight of their apparatus — that, from certain peculiar associations, he is affected with disgust when he passes by their shops. He gives, indeed, another reason; a certain law or custom, which never existed but in the imaginations of old women, and which, if it had existed, would have proved just as much against butchers as the antient prejudice against the practice of taking interest for money, proves against the merchants of England. Is a surgeon a castaway? We believe that nurses, when they instruct children in that venerable law or custom which Mr. Southey so highly approves, generally join the surgeon to the butcher. A dissecting-room would, we should think, affect the nerves of most people as much as a butcher's shambles. But the most amusing circumstance is, that Mr. Southey, who detests a butcher, should look with special favour on a soldier. He seems highly to approve of the sentiment of General Meadows, who swore that a grenadier was the highest character in this world or in the next; and assures us, that a virtuous soldier is placed in the situation which most tends to his improvement, and will most promote his eternal interests. Human blood, indeed, is by no means an object of so much loathing to Mr. Southey as the hides and paunches of cattle. In 1814, he poured forth poetical maledictions on all who talked of peace with Buonaparte. He went over the field of Waterloo, — a field, beneath which twenty thousand of the stoutest hearts that ever beat are mouldering, — and came back in an ecstasy, which he mistook for poetical inspiration. In most of his poems, — particularly in his best poem, *Roderick*, — and in most of his prose works, particularly in *The History of the Peninsular War*, — he shows a delight in snuffing up carnage, which would not have misbecome a Scandinavian bard, but which sometimes seems to harmonize ill with the Christian morality. We do not, however, blame Mr. Southey for exulting, even a little ferociously, in the brave deeds of his countrymen, or for finding something ‘ comely and reviving ’ in the bloody vengeance inflicted by an oppressed people on its oppressors. Now, surely, if we find that a man whose business is to kill Frenchmen may be humane, we may hope that means may be found to render a man humane whose business is to kill sheep. If the brutalizing effect of such scenes as the storm of St. Sebastian may be counteracted, we may hope that in a Christian Utopia, some minds might be proof against the kennels and dressers of Aldgate. Mr. Southey's feeling, however, is easily explained. A butcher's knife is by no means so elegant as a sabre, and a calf does not bleed with half the grace of a poor wounded hussar.

It is in the same manner that Mr. Southey appears to have formed his opinion of the manufacturing system. There is nothing which he hates so bitterly. It is, according to him, a system more tyrannical than that of the feudal ages, — a system of actual servitude, — a system which destroys the bodies and degrades the minds of those who are engaged in it. He expresses a hope that the competition of other nations may drive us out of the field; that our foreign trade may decline, and that we may thus enjoy a restoration of national sanity and strength. But he seems to think that the extermination of the whole manufacturing population would be a blessing, if the evil could be removed in no other way.

Mr. Southey does not bring forward a single fact in support of these views, and, as it seems to us, there are facts which lead to a very different conclusion. In the first place, the poor-rate is very decidedly lower in the manufacturing than in the agricultural districts. If Mr. Southey will look over the Parliamentary returns on this subject, he will find that the amount of parish relief required by the labourers in the different counties of England is almost exactly in inverse proportion to the degree in which the manufacturing system has been introduced into those counties. The returns for the years ending in March 1825 and in March 1828 are now before us. In the former year, we find the poor-rate highest in Sussex, — about 20s. to every inhabitant. Then come Buckinghamshire, Essex, Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Kent, and Norfolk. In all these the rate is above 15s. a-head. We will not go through the whole. Even in Westmoreland, and the North Riding of Yorkshire, the rate is at more than 8s. In Cumberland and Monmouthshire, the most fortunate of all the agricultural districts, it is at 6s. But in the West Riding of Yorkshire it is as low as 5s.; and when we come to Lancashire, we find it at 4s., — one-fifth of what it is in Sussex. The returns of the year ending in March 1828 are a little, and but a little, more unfavourable to the manufacturing districts. Lancashire, even in that season of distress, required a smaller poor-rate than any other district, and little more than one-fourth of the poor-rate raised in Sussex. Cumberland alone, of the agricultural districts, was as well off as the West Riding of Yorkshire. These facts seem to indicate that the manufacturer is both in a more comfortable and in a less dependent situation than the agricultural labourer.

As to the effect of the manufacturing system on the bodily health, we must beg leave to estimate it by a standard far too low and vulgar for a mind so imaginative as that of Mr. Southey — the proportion of births and deaths. We know that, during the growth of this atrocious system — this new misery, — (we use the phrases of Mr. Southey,) — this new enormity — this birth of a portentous age — this pest, which no man can approve whose heart is not seared, or whose understanding has not been darkened — there has been a great diminution of mortality — and that this diminution has been greater in the manufacturing towns than anywhere else. The mortality still is, as it always was, greater in towns than in the country. But the difference has diminished in an extraordinary degree. There is the best reason to believe, that the annual mortality of Manchester, about the middle of the last century, was one in twenty-eight. It is now reckoned at one in forty-five. In Glasgow and Leeds a similar improvement has taken place. Nay, the rate of mortality in those three great capitals of the

manufacturing districts is now considerably less than it was fifty years ago over England and Wales taken together — open country and all. We might with some plausibility maintain, that the people live longer because they are better fed, better lodged, better clothed, and better attended in sickness; and that these improvements are owing to that increase of national wealth which the manufacturing system has produced.

Much more might be said on this subject. But to what end? It is not from bills of mortality and statistical tables that Mr. Southey has learned his political creed. He cannot stoop to study the history of the system which he abuses — to strike the balance between the good and evil which it has produced — to compare district with district, or generation with generation. We will give his own reason for his opinion — the only reason which he gives for it — in his own words:

‘ We remained awhile in silence, looking upon the assemblage of dwellings below. Here, and in the adjoining hamlet of Millbeck, the effects of manufactures and of agriculture may be seen and compared. The old cottages are such as the poet and the painter equally delight in beholding. Substantially built of the native stone without mortar, dirtied with no white lime, and their long low roofs covered with slate, if they had been raised by the magic of some indigenous Amphion’s music, the materials could not have adjusted themselves more beautifully in accord with the surrounding scene; and time has still further harmonized them with weather-stains, lichens, and moss, short grasses, and short fern, and stone-plants of various kinds. The ornamented chimneys, round or square, less adorned than those which, like little turrets, crest the houses of the Portuguese peasantry; and yet not less happily suited to their place, the hedge of clipped box beneath the windows, the rose-bushes beside the door, the little patch of flower-ground, with its tall hollyocks in front; the garden beside, the bee-hives, and the orchard with its bank of daffodils and snow-drops, the earliest and the profusest in these parts, indicate in the owners some portion of ease and leisure, some regard to neatness and comfort, some sense of natural, and innocent, and healthful enjoyment. The new cottages of the manufacturers are upon the manufacturing pattern — naked, and in a row.

‘ How is it, said I, that every thing which is connected with manufactures presents such features of unqualified deformity? From the largest of Mammon’s temples down to the poorest hovel in which his helotry are stalled, these edifices have all one character. Time will not mellow them; nature will neither clothe nor conceal them; and they will remain always as offensive to the eye as to the mind.’

Here is wisdom; here are the principles on which nations are to be governed. Rose-bushes and poor-rates, rather than steam-engines and independence: mortality and cottages with weather-stains, rather than health and long life, with edifices which time cannot mellow. We are told, that our age has invented atrocities beyond the imagination of our fathers; that society has been brought into a state, compared with which extermination would be a blessing; — and all because the dwellings of cotton spinners are naked and rectangular. Mr. Southey has found out a way, he tells us, in which the effects of manufactures and agriculture may be compared. And what is this way? To stand on a hill, to look at a cottage and a manufactory, and to see which is the prettier. Does Mr. Southey think that the body of the English peasantry live, or ever

lived, in substantial and ornamented cottages, with box-hedges, flower-gardens, bee-hives, and orchards? If not, what is his parallel worth? We despise those *filosofastri*, who think that they serve the cause of science by depreciating literature and the fine arts. But if any thing could excuse their narrowness of mind, it would be such a book as this. It is not strange that when one enthusiast makes the picturesque the test of political good, another should feel inclined to proscribe altogether the pleasures of taste and imagination.

Thus it is that Mr. Southey reasons about matters with which he thinks himself perfectly conversant. We cannot, therefore, be surprised to find that he commits extraordinary blunders when he writes on points of which he acknowledges himself to be ignorant. He confesses that he is not versed in political economy — that he has neither liking nor aptitude for it; and he then proceeds to read the public a lecture concerning it, which fully bears out his confession.

‘All wealth,’ says Sir Thomas More, ‘in former times was tangible. It consisted in land, money, or chattels, which were either of real or conventional value.’

Montesinos, as Mr. Southey somewhat affectedly calls himself, answers: —

‘Jewels, for example, and pictures, as in Holland,—where indeed at one time tulip bulbs answered the same purpose.’

‘That bubble,’ says Sir Thomas, ‘was one of those contagious insanities to which communities are subject. All wealth was real, till the extent of commerce rendered a paper currency necessary, which differed from precious stones and pictures in this important point, that there was no limit to its production.’

‘We regard it,’ says Montesinos, ‘as the representative of real wealth; and, therefore, limited always to the amount of what it represents.’

‘Pursue that notion,’ answers the ghost, ‘and you will be in the dark presently. Your provincial bank-notes, which constitute almost wholly the circulating medium of certain districts, pass current to-day. To-morrow, tidings may come that the house which issued them has stopt payment; and what do they represent then? You will find them the shadow of a shade.’

We scarcely know at which end to begin to disentangle this knot of absurdities. We might ask, why it should be a greater proof of insanity in men to set a high value on rare tulips than on rare stones, which are neither more useful nor more beautiful? We might ask, how it can be said that there is no limit to the production of paper-money, when a man is hanged if he issues any in the name of another, and is forced to cash what he issues in his own? But Mr. Southey’s error lies deeper still. ‘All wealth,’ says he, ‘was tangible and real, till paper currency was introduced.’ Now, was there ever, since men emerged from a state of utter barbarism, an age in which there were no debts? Is not a debt, while the solvency of the debtor is undoubted, always reckoned as part of the wealth of the creditor? Yet is it tangible and real wealth? Does it cease to be wealth, because there is the security of a written acknowledgment for it? And what else is paper currency? Did Mr. Southey ever read a bank-note? If he did, he would see that it is a written acknowledgment of a debt, and a promise to pay that debt. The promise may be violated — the debt may remain unpaid — those to whom it was due may suffer: but this is a risk not confined to cases of paper currency — it is a risk inseparable from the relation of debtor and cre-

ditor. Every man who sells goods for any thing but ready money runs the risk of finding that what he considered as part of his wealth one day is nothing at all the next day. Mr. Southey refers to the picture-galleries of Holland. The pictures were undoubtedly real and tangible possessions. But surely it might happen, that a burgomaster might owe a picture-dealer a thousand guilders for a Teniers. What in this case corresponds to our paper money is not the picture, which is tangible, but the claim of the picture-dealer on his customer for the price of the picture, which is not tangible. Now, would not the picture-dealer consider this claim as part of his wealth? Would not a tradesman who knew of it give credit to the picture-dealer the more readily on account of it? The burgomaster might be ruined. If so, would not those consequences follow which, as Mr. Southey tells us, were never heard of till paper money came into use? Yesterday this claim was worth a thousand guilders. To-day what is it? The shadow of a shade.

It is true, that the more readily claims of this sort are transferred from hand to hand, the more extensive will be the injury produced by a single failure. The laws of all nations sanction, in certain cases, the transfer of rights not yet reduced into possession. Mr. Southey would scarcely wish, we should think, that all indorsements of bills and notes should be declared invalid. Yet even if this were done, the transfer of claims would imperceptibly take place to a very great extent. When the baker trusts the butcher, for example, he is in fact, though not in form, trusting the butcher's customers. A man who owes large bills to tradesmen, and fails to pay them, almost always produces distress through a very wide circle of people whom he never dealt with.

In short, what Mr. Southey takes for a difference in kind, is only a difference of form and degree. In every society men have claims on the property of others. In every society there is a possibility that some debtors may not be able to fulfil their obligations. In every society, therefore, there is wealth which is not tangible, and which may become the shadow of a shade.

Mr. Southey then proceeds to a dissertation on the national debt, which he considers in a new and most consolatory light, as a clear addition to the income of the country.

'You can understand,' says Sir Thomas, 'that it constitutes a great part of the national wealth.'

'So large a part,' answers Montesinos, 'that the interest amounted, during the prosperous time of agriculture, to as much as the rental of all the land in Great Britain; and at present to the rental of all lands, all houses, and all other fixed property put together.'

The Ghost and the Laureate agree that it is very desirable that there should be so secure and advantageous a deposit for wealth as the funds afford. Sir Thomas then proceeds:

'Another and far more momentous benefit must not be overlooked; the expenditure of an annual interest, equalling, as you have stated, the present rental of all fixed property.'

'That expenditure,' quoth Montesinos, 'gives employment to half the industry in the kingdom, and feeds half the mouths. Take, indeed, the weight of the national debt from this great and complicated social machine, and the wheels must stop.'

From this passage we should have been inclined to think, that Mr. Southey supposes the dividends to be a free-gift periodically sent

down from heaven to the fundholders, as quails and manna were sent to the Israelites; were it not that he has vouchsafed, in the following question and answer, to give the public some information which, we believe, was very little needed.

‘Whence comes the interest?’ say Sir Thomas.

‘It is raised,’ answers Montesinos, ‘by taxation.’

Now, has Mr. Southey ever considered what would be done with this sum if it were not paid as interest to the national creditor? If he would think over this matter for a short time, we suspect that the ‘momentous benefit’ of which he talks would appear to him to shrink strangely in amount. A fundholder, we will suppose, spends an income of five hundred pounds a-year, and his ten nearest neighbours pay fifty pounds each to the tax-gatherer for the purpose of discharging the interest of the national debt. If the debt were wiped out — a measure, be it understood, which we by no means recommend — the fundholder would cease to spend his five hundred pounds a-year; he would no longer give employment to industry, or put food into the mouths of labourers. This Mr. Southey thinks a fearful evil. But is there no mitigating circumstance? Each of his ten neighbours has fifty pounds more than formerly. Each of them will, as it seems to our feeble understandings, employ more industry, and feed more mouths, than formerly. The sum is exactly the same. It is in different hands. But on what grounds does Mr. Southey call upon us to believe that it is in the hands of men who will spend less liberally or less judiciously? He seems to think, that nobody but a fundholder can employ the poor; that if a tax is remitted, those who formerly used to pay it proceed immediately to dig holes in the earth, and bury the sum which the government had been accustomed to take; that no money can set industry in motion till it has been taken by the tax-gatherer out of one man’s pocket and put into another man’s. We really wish that Mr. Southey would try to prove this principle, which is indeed the foundation of his whole theory of finance; for we think it right to hint to him, that our hard-hearted and unimaginative generation will expect some more satisfactory reason than the only one with which he has yet favoured it, — a similitude touching evaporation and dew.

Both the theory and the illustration, indeed, are old friends of ours. In every season of distress which we can remember, Mr. Southey has been proclaiming that it is not from economy, but from increased taxation, that the country must expect relief; and he still, we find, places the undoubting faith of a political Diafoirus, in his

‘Resaignare, repurgare, et reclysterizare.’

‘A people,’ he tells us, ‘may be too rich, but a government cannot be so.’

‘A state,’ says he, ‘cannot have more wealth at its command than may be employed for the general good, a liberal expenditure in national works being one of the surest means for promoting national prosperity; and the benefit being still more obvious, of an expenditure directed to the purposes of national improvement. But a people may be too rich.’

We fully admit, that a state cannot have at its command more wealth than *may be* employed for the general good. But neither can individuals, or bodies of individuals, have at their command more wealth than *may be* employed for the general good. If there be no limit to

the sum which may be usefully laid out in public works and national improvement, then wealth, whether in the hands of private men or of the government, *may* always, if the possessors choose to spend it usefully, be usefully spent. The only ground, therefore, on which Mr. Southey can possibly maintain that a government cannot be too rich, but that a people may be too rich, must be this, that governments are more likely to spend their money on good objects than private individuals.

But what is useful expenditure? ‘A liberal expenditure in national works,’ says Mr. Southey, ‘is one of the surest means for promoting national prosperity.’ What does he mean by national prosperity? Does he mean the wealth of the state? If so, his reasoning runs thus:—The more wealth a state has the better; for the more wealth a state has, the more wealth it will have. This is surely something like that fallacy which is ungallantly termed a lady’s reason. If by national prosperity he means the wealth of the people, of how gross a contradiction is he guilty. A people, he tells us, may be too rich—a government cannot—for a government can employ its riches in making the people richer. The wealth of the people is to be taken from them, because they have too much, and laid out in works which will yield them more.

We are really at a loss to determine whether Mr. Southey’s reason for recommending large taxation is that it will make the people rich, or that it will make them poor. But we are sure, that if his object is to make them rich, he takes the wrong course. There are two or three principles respecting public works, which, as an experience of vast extent proves, may be trusted in almost every case.

It scarcely ever happens, that any private man, or body of men, will invest property in a canal, a tunnel, or a bridge, but from an expectation that the outlay will be profitable to them. No work of this sort can be profitable to private speculators unless the public be willing to pay for the use of it. The public will not pay of their own accord for what yields no profit or convenience to them. There is thus a direct and obvious connexion between the motive which induces individuals to undertake such a work, and the utility of the work.

Can we find any such connexion in the case of a public work executed by a government? If it is useful, are the individuals who rule the country richer? If it is useless, are they poorer? A public man may be solicitous for his credit: but is not he likely to gain more credit by an useless display of ostentatious architecture in a great town, than by the best road or the best canal in some remote province? The fame of public works is a much less certain test of their utility, than the amount of toll collected at them. In a corrupt age, there will be direct embezzlement. In the purest age, there will be abundance of jobbing. Never were the statesmen of any country more sensitive to public opinion, and more spotless in pecuniary transactions, than those who have of late governed England. Yet we have only to look at the buildings recently erected in London for a proof of our rule. In a bad age, the fate of the public is to be robbed. In a good age, it is much milder—merely to have the dearest and the worst of every thing.

Buildings for state purposes the state must erect. And here we think that, in general, the state ought to stop. We firmly believe, that five hundred thousand pounds subscribed by individuals for rail-roads

or canals would produce more advantage to the public than five millions voted by Parliament for the same purpose. There are certain old saws about the master's eye and about every body's business, in which we place very great faith.

There is, we have said, no consistency in Mr. Southey's political system. But if there be in it any leading principle, if there be any one error which diverges more widely and variously than any other, it is that of which his theory about national works is a ramification. He conceives that the business of the magistrate is, not merely to see that the persons and property of the people are secure from attack, but that he ought to be a perfect jack-of-all-trades, — architect, engineer, schoolmaster, merchant, theologian, — a Lady Bountiful in every parish, — a Paul Pry in every house, spying, eaves-dropping, relieving, admonishing, spending our money for us, and choosing our opinions for us. His principle is, if we understand it rightly, that no man can do any thing so well for himself as his rulers, be they who they may, can do it for him; that a government approaches nearer and nearer to perfection in proportion as it interferes more and more with the habits and notions of individuals.

He seems to be fully convinced, that it is in the power of government to relieve the distresses under which the lower orders labour. Nay, he considers doubt on this subject as impious. We cannot refrain from quoting his argument on this subject. It is a perfect jewel of logic.

‘Many thousands in your metropolis,’ says Sir Thomas More, ‘rise every morning without knowing how they are to subsist during the day; as many of them, where they are to lay their heads at night. All men, even the vicious themselves, know that wickedness leads to misery; but many, even among the good and the wise, have yet to learn that misery is almost as often the cause of wickedness.’

‘There are many,’ says Montesinos, ‘who know this, but believe that it is not in the power of human institutions to prevent this misery. They see the effect, but regard the causes as inseparable from the condition of human nature.’

‘As surely as God is good,’ replies Sir Thomas, ‘so surely there is no such thing as necessary evil. For, by the religious mind, sickness, and pain, and death, are not to be accounted evils.’

Now, if sickness, pain, and death, are not evils, we cannot understand why it should be an evil that thousands should rise without knowing how they are to subsist. The only evil of hunger is, that it produces first pain, then sickness, and finally death. If it did not produce these it would be no calamity. If these are not evils, it is no calamity. We cannot conceive why it should be a greater impeachment of the Divine goodness, that some men should not be able to find food to eat, than that others should have stomachs which derive no nourishment from food when they have eaten it. Whatever physical effects want produces, may also be produced by disease. Whatever salutary effects disease may produce, may also be produced by want. If poverty makes men thieves, disease and pain often sour the temper and contract the heart.

We will propose a very plain dilemma: Either physical pain is an evil, or it is not an evil. If it is an evil, then there is necessary evil in the universe: If it is not, why should the poor be delivered from it?

Mr. Southey entertains as exaggerated a notion of the wisdom of governments as of their power. He speaks with the greatest disgust of the respect now paid to public opinion. That opinion is, according to him, to be distrusted and dreaded; its usurpation ought to be vigorously resisted; and the practice of yielding to it is likely to ruin the country. To maintain police is, according to him, only one of the ends of government. Its duties are patriarchal and paternal. It ought to consider the moral discipline of the people as its first object, to establish a religion, to train the whole community in that religion, and to consider all dissenters as its own enemies.

‘Nothing,’ says Sir Thomas, ‘is more certain, than that religion is the basis upon which civil government rests; that from religion power derives its authority, laws their efficacy, and both their zeal and sanction; and it is necessary that this religion be established as for the security of the state, and for the welfare of the people, who would otherwise be moved to and fro with every wind of doctrine. A state is secure in proportion as the people are attached to its institutions; it is, therefore, the first and plainest rule of sound policy, that the people be trained up in the way they should go. The state that neglects this prepares its own destruction; and they who train them in any other way are undermining it. Nothing in abstract science can be more certain than these positions are.’

‘All of which,’ answers Montesinos, ‘are nevertheless denied by our professors of the arts Babblative and Scribblative; some in the audacity of evil designs, and others in the glorious assurance of impetrable ignorance.’

The greater part of the two volumes before us is merely an amplification of these absurd paragraphs. What does Mr. Southey mean by saying, that religion is demonstrably the basis of civil government? He cannot surely mean that men have no motives except those derived from religion for establishing and supporting civil government, that no temporal advantage is derived from civil government, that man would experience no temporal inconvenience from living in a state of anarchy? If he allows, as we think he must allow, that it is for the good of mankind in this world to have civil government, and that the great majority of mankind have always thought it for their good in this world to have civil government, we then have a basis for government quite distinct from religion. It is true, that the Christian religion sanctions government, as it sanctions every thing which promotes the happiness and virtue of our species. But we are at a loss to conceive in what sense religion can be said to be the basis of government, in which it is not also the basis of the practices of eating, drinking, and lighting fires in cold weather. Nothing in history is more certain than that government has existed, has received some obedience and given some protection, in times in which it derived no support from religion,—in times in which there was no religion that influenced the hearts and lives of men. It was not from dread of Tartarus, or belief in the Elysian fields, than an Athenian wished to have some institutions which might keep Orestes from filching his cloak, or Midias from breaking his head. ‘It is from religion,’ says Mr. Southey, ‘that power derives its authority, and laws their efficacy.’ From what religion does our power over the Hindoos derive its authority, or the law in virtue of which we hang Brahmins its efficacy? For thousands of years civil government has existed in almost every corner of the world,—in ages of priestcraft,—

in ages of fanaticism,—in ages of Epicurean indifference,—in ages of enlightened piety. However pure or impure the faith of the people might be, whether they adored a beneficent or a malignant power, whether they thought the soul mortal or immortal, they have, as soon as they ceased to be absolute savages, found out their need of civil government, and instituted it accordingly. It is as universal as the practice of cookery. Yet, it is as certain, says Mr. Southey, as any thing in abstract science, that government is founded on religion. We should like to know what notion Mr. Southey has of the demonstrations of abstract science. But a vague one, we suspect.

The proof proceeds. As religion is the basis of government, and as the state is secure in proportion as the people are attached to its institutions, it is therefore, says Mr. Southey, the first rule of policy, that the government should train the people in the way in which they should go; and it is plain, that those who train them in any other way, are undermining the state.

Now it does not appear to us to be the first object, that people should always believe in the established religion, and be attached to the established government. A religion may be false. A government may be oppressive. And whatever support government gives to false religions, or religion to oppressive governments, we consider as a clear evil.

The maxim, that governments ought to train the people in the way in which they should go, sounds well. But is there any reason for believing that a government is more likely to lead the people in the right way, than the people to fall into the right way of themselves? Have there not been governments which were blind leaders of the blind? Are there not still such governments? Can it be laid down as a general rule that the movement of political and religious truth is rather downwards from the government to the people, than upwards from the people to the government? These are questions which it is of importance to have clearly resolved. Mr. Southey declaims against public opinion, which is now, he tells us, usurping supreme power. Formerly, according to him, the laws governed; now public opinion governs. What are laws but expressions of the opinion of some class which has power over the rest of the community? By what was the world ever governed, but by the opinion of some person or persons? By what else can it ever be governed? What are all systems, religious, political, or scientific, but opinions resting on evidence more or less satisfactory? The question is not between human opinion and some higher and more certain mode of arriving at truth, but between opinion and opinion,—between the opinion of one man and another, or of one class and another, or of one generation and another. Public opinion is not infallible; but can Mr. Southey construct any institutions which shall secure to us the guidance of an infallible opinion? Can Mr. Southey select any family,—any profession,—any class, in short, distinguished by any plain badge from the rest of the community, whose opinion is more likely to be just than this much abused public opinion? Would he choose the peers, for example? Or the two hundred tallest men in the country? Or the poor Knights of Windsor? Or children who are born with cawls, seventh sons of seventh sons? We cannot suppose that he would recommend popular election; for that is merely an appeal to public opinion. And to say that society ought to be governed by the opinion of the wisest and best, though true, is useless. Whose opinion is to decide who are the wisest and best?

Mr. Southey and many other respectable people seem to think that when they have once proved the moral and religious training of the people to be a most important object, it follows, of course, that it is an object which the government ought to pursue. They forget that we have to consider, not merely the goodness of the end, but also the fitness of the means. Neither in the natural nor in the political body have all members the same office. There is surely no contradiction in saying that a certain section of the community may be quite competent to protect the persons and property of the rest, yet quite unfit to direct our opinions or to superintend our private habits.

So strong is the interest of a ruler to protect his subjects against all depredations and outrages except his own, so clear and simple are the means by which this end is to be effected, that men are probably better off under the worst governments in the world, than they would be in a state of anarchy. Even when the appointment of magistrates has been left to chance, as in the Italian Republics, things have gone on better than they would have done if there had been no magistrates at all, and every man had done what seemed right in his own eyes. But we see no reason for thinking that the opinions of the magistrate are more likely to be right than those of any other man. None of the modes by which rulers are appointed, — popular election, the accident of the lot, or the accident of birth, — afford, as far as we can perceive, much security for their being wiser than any of their neighbours. The chance of their being wiser than all their neighbours together is still smaller. Now, we cannot conceive how it can be laid down, that it is the duty and the right of one class to direct the opinions of another, unless it can be proved that the former class is more likely to form just opinions than the latter.

The duties of government would be, as Mr. Southey says that they are, paternal, if a government were necessarily as much superior in wisdom to a people, as the most foolish father, for a time, is to the most intelligent child, and if a government loved a people as fathers generally love their children. But there is no reason to believe that a government will either have the paternal warmth of affection or the paternal superiority of intellect. Mr. Southey might as well say that the duties of the shoemaker are paternal, and that it is an usurpation in any man not of the craft to say that his shoes are bad, and to insist on having better. The division of labour would be no blessing if those by whom a thing is done were to pay no attention to the opinion of those for whom it is done. The shoemaker, in the *Relapse*, tells Lord Foppington that his lordship is mistaken in supposing that his shoe pinches. ‘It does not pinch — it cannot pinch — I know my business — and I never made a better shoe.’ This is the way in which Mr. Southey would have a government treat a people who usurp the privilege of thinking. Nay, the shoemaker of Vanburgh has the advantage in the comparison. He contented himself with regulating his customer’s shoes, about which he knew something, and did not presume to dictate about the coat and hat. But Mr. Southey would have the rulers of a country prescribe opinions to the people, not only about politics, but about matters concerning which a government has no peculiar sources of information, — concerning which any man in the streets may know as much and think as justly as a king, — religion and morals.

Men are never so likely to settle a question rightly as when they discuss it freely. A government can interfere in discussion only by

making it less free than it would otherwise be. Men are most likely to form just opinions when they have no other wish than to know the truth, and are exempt from all influence, either of hope or fear. Government, as government, can bring nothing but the influence of hopes and fears to support its doctrines. It carries on controversy, not with reasons, but with threats and bribes. If it employs reasons, it does so not in virtue of any powers which belong to it as a government. Thus, instead of a contest between argument and argument, we have a contest between argument and force. Instead of a contest in which truth, from the natural constitution of the human mind, has a decided advantage over falsehood, we have a contest in which truth can be victorious only by accident.

And what, after all, is the security which this training gives to governments? Mr. Southey would scarcely recommend that discussion should be more effectually shackled, that public opinion should be more strictly disciplined into conformity with established institutions, than in Spain and Italy. Yet we know that the restraints which exist in Spain and Italy have not prevented atheism from spreading among the educated classes, and especially among those whose office it is to minister at the altars of God. All our readers know how, at the time of the French Revolution, priest after priest came forward to declare that his doctrine, his ministry, his whole life, had been a lie,—a mummery, during which he could scarcely compose his countenance sufficiently to carry on the imposture. This was the case of a false, or at least a grossly corrupted, religion. Let us take, then, the case of all others the most favourable to Mr. Southey's argument. Let us take that form of religion which he holds to be the purest,—the system of the Arminian part of the Church of England. Let us take the form of government which he most admires and regrets,—the government of England in the time of Charles the First. Would he wish to see a closer connexion between church and state than then existed? Would he wish for more powerful ecclesiastical tribunals? for a more zealous king? for a more active primate? Would he wish to see a more complete monopoly of public instruction given to the established church? Could any government do more to train the people in the way in which he would have them go? And in what did all this training end? The Report of the State of the Province of Canterbury, delivered by Laud to his Master at the close of 1639, represents the Church of England as in the highest and most palmy state. So effectually had the government pursued that policy which Mr. Southey wishes to see revived, that there was scarcely the least appearance of dissent. Most of the bishops stated that all was well among their flocks. Seven or eight persons in the diocese of Peterborough had seemed refractory to the church, but had made ample submission. In Norfolk and Suffolk all whom there had been reason to suspect, had made profession of conformity, and appeared to observe it strictly. It is confessed that there was a little difficulty in bringing some of the vulgar in Suffolk to take the sacrament at the rails in the chancel. This was the only open instance of non-conformity which the vigilant eye of Laud could find in all the dioceses of his twenty-one suffragans, on the very eve of a revolution in which primate and church, and monarch and monarchy, were to perish together.

At which time would Mr. Southey pronounce the constitution more secure;—in 1639, when Laud presented this Report to Charles, or

now, when thousands of meetings openly collect millions of dissenters, when designs against the tithes are openly avowed, when books, attacking not only the Establishment, but the first principles of Christianity, are openly sold in the streets? The signs of discontent, he tells us, are stronger in England now than in France when the States General met; and hence he would have us infer that a revolution like that of France may be at hand. Does he not know that the danger of states is to be estimated, not by what breaks out of the public mind, but by what stays in it? Can he conceive any thing more terrible than the situation of a government which rules without apprehension over a people of hypocrites, — which is flattered by the press, and cursed in the inner chambers, — which exults in the attachment and obedience of its subjects, and knows not that those subjects are leagued against it in a free-masonry of hatred, the sign of which is every day conveyed in the glance of ten thousand eyes, the pressure of ten thousand hands, and the tone of ten thousand voices? Profound and ingenious policy! Instead of curing the disease, to remove those symptoms by which alone its nature can be known! To leave the serpent his deadly sting, and deprive him only of his warning rattle!

When the people whom Charles had so assiduously trained in the good way had rewarded his paternal care by cutting off his head, a new kind of training came into fashion. Another government arose, which, like the former, considered religion as its surest basis, and the religious discipline of the people as its first duty. Sanguinary laws were enacted against libertinism; profane pictures were burned; drapery was put on indecorous statues; the theatres were shut up; fast-days were numerous; and the Parliament resolved that no person should be admitted into any public employment unless the House should be first satisfied of his vital godliness. We know what was the end of this training. We know that it ended in impiety, in filthy and heartless sensuality, in the dissolution of all ties of honour and morality. We know that at this very day scriptural phrases, scriptural names, perhaps some scriptural doctrines, excite disgust and ridicule solely because they are associated with the austerity of that period.

Thus has the experiment of training the people in established forms of religion been twice tried in England on a large scale; once by Charles and Laud, and once by the Puritans. The high Tories of our time still entertain many of the feelings and opinions of Charles and Laud, though in a mitigated form; nor is it difficult to see that the heirs of the Puritans are still amongst us. It would be desirable that each of these parties should remember how little advantage or honour it formerly derived from the closest alliance with power, — that it fell by the support of rulers, and rose by their opposition, — that of the two systems, that in which the people were at any time being drilled, was always at that time the unpopular system, — that the training of the High Church ended in the reign of the Puritans, and the training of the Puritans in the reign of the harlots.

This was quite natural. Nothing is so galling and detestable to a people, not broken in from the birth, as a paternal, or, in other words, a meddling government, — a government which tells them what to read, and say, and eat, and drink, and wear. Our fathers could not bear it two hundred years ago; and we are not more patient than they. Mr. Southey thinks that the yoke of the church is dropping off, because it is loose. We feel convinced that it is borne only because it is easy,

and that, in the instant in which an attempt is made to tighten it, it will be flung away. It will be neither the first nor the strongest yoke that has been broken asunder and trampled under foot in the day of the vengeance of England.

How far Mr. Southey would have the government carry its measures for training the people in the doctrines of the church, we are unable to discover. In one passage Sir Thomas More asks with great vehemence,

‘ Is it possible that your laws should suffer the unbelievers to exist as a party ?

‘ *Vetitum est adeo sceleris nihil ?*

Montesinos answers. ‘ They avow themselves in defiance of the laws. The fashionable doctrine which the press at this time maintains is, that this is a matter in which the laws ought not to interfere, every man having a right, both to form what opinion he pleases upon religious subjects, and to promulgate that opinion.’

It is clear, therefore, that Mr. Southey would not give full and perfect toleration to infidelity. In another passage, however, he observes, with some truth, though too sweepingly, that ‘ any degree of intolerance short of that full extent which the Papal Church exercises where it has the power, acts upon the opinions which it is intended to suppress like pruning upon vigorous plants; they grow the stronger for it.’ These two passages put together would lead us to the conclusion that, in Mr. Southey’s opinion, the utmost severity ever employed by the Roman Catholic Church in the days of its greatest power ought to be employed against unbelievers in England; in plain words, that Carlile and his shopmen ought to be burned in Smithfield, and that every person who, when called upon, should decline to make a solemn profession of Christianity, ought to suffer the same fate. We do not, however, believe that Mr. Southey would recommend such a course, though his language would, in the case of any other writer, justify us in supposing this to be his meaning. His opinions form no system at all. He never sees, at one glance, more of a question than will furnish matter for one flowing and well-turned sentence; so that it would be the height of unfairness to charge him personally with holding a doctrine, merely because that doctrine is deducible, though by the closest and most accurate reasoning, from the premises which he has laid down. We are, therefore, left completely in the dark as to Mr. Southey’s opinions about toleration. Immediately after censuring the government for not punishing infidels, he proceeds to discuss the question of the Catholic disabilities — now, thank God, removed — and defends them on the ground that the Catholic doctrines tend to persecution, and that the Catholics persecuted when they had power.

‘ They must persecute,’ says he, ‘ if they believe their own creed, for conscience-sake; and if they do not believe it, they must persecute for policy; because it is only by intolerance that so corrupt and injurious a system can be upheld.’

That unbelievers should not be persecuted is an instance of national depravity at which the glorified spirits stand aghast. Yet a sect of Christians is to be excluded from power, because those who formerly held the same opinions were guilty of persecution. We have said that we do not very well know what Mr. Southey’s opinion about toleration is. But, on the whole, we take it to be this, that every body is to tolerate him, and that he is to tolerate nobody.

We will not be deterred by any fear of misrepresentation from expressing our hearty approbation of the mild, wise, and eminently Christian manner, in which the Church and the Government have lately acted with respect to blasphemous publications. We praise them for not having thought it necessary to encircle a religion pure, merciful, and philosophical, — a religion to the evidences of which the highest intellects have yielded, — with the defences of a false and bloody superstition. The ark of God was never taken till it was surrounded by the arms of earthly defenders. In captivity, its sanctity was sufficient to vindicate it from insult, and to lay the hostile fiend prostrate on the threshold of his own temple. The real security of Christianity is to be found in its benevolent morality, in its exquisite adaptation to the human heart, in the facility with which its scheme accommodates itself to the capacity of every human intellect, in the consolation which it bears to the house of mourning, in the light with which it brightens the great mystery of the grave. To such a system it can bring no addition of dignity or of strength, that it is part and parcel of the common law. It is not now for the first time left to rely on the force of its own evidences, and the attractions of its own beauty. Its sublime theology confounded the Grecian schools in the fair conflict of reason with reason. The bravest and wisest of the Cæsars found their arms and their policy unavailing when opposed to the weapons that were not carnal, and the kingdom that was not of this world. The victory which Porphyry and Diocletian failed to gain, is not, to all appearance, reserved for any of those who have in this age directed their attacks against the last restraint of the powerful, and the last hope of the wretched. The whole history of the Christian Religion shows, that she is in far greater danger of being corrupted by the alliance of power, than of being crushed by its opposition. Those who thrust temporal sovereignty upon her, treat her as their prototypes treated her author. They bow the knee, and spit upon her; they cry Hail! and smite her on the cheek; they put a sceptre into her hand, but it is a fragile reed; they crown her, but it is with thorns; they cover with purple the wounds which their own hands have inflicted on her; and inscribe magnificent titles over the cross on which they have fixed her to perish in ignominy and pain.

The general view which Mr. Southey takes of the prospects of society is very gloomy; but we comfort ourselves with the consideration that Mr. Southey is no prophet. He foretold, we remember, on the very eve of the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts, that these hateful laws were immortal, and that pious minds would long be gratified by seeing the most solemn religious rite of the Church profaned, for the purpose of upholding her political supremacy. In the book before us, he says that Catholics cannot possibly be admitted into Parliament until those whom Johnson called ‘the bottomless Whigs,’ come into power. While the book was in the press, the prophecy was falsified, and a Tory of the Tories, Mr. Southey’s own favourite hero, won and wore that noblest wreath, ‘*Ob cives servatos.*’

The signs of the times, Mr. Southey tells us, are very threatening. His fears for the country would decidedly preponderate over his hopes, but for his firm reliance on the mercy of God. Now, as we know that God has once suffered the civilized world to be overrun by savages, and the Christian religion to be corrupted by doctrines which made it, for some ages, almost as bad as Paganism, we cannot think it incon-

sistent with his attributes that similar calamities should again befall mankind.

We look, however, on the state of the world, and of this kingdom in particular, with much greater satisfaction, and with better hopes. Mr. Southey speaks with contempt of those who think the savage state happier than the social. On this subject, he says, Rousseau never imposed on him even in his youth. But he conceives that a community which has advanced a little way in civilization is happier than one which has made greater progress. The Britons in the time of Cæsar were happier, he suspects, than the English of the nineteenth century. On the whole, he selects the generation which preceded the Reformation as that in which the people of this country were better off than at any time before or since.

This opinion rests on nothing, as far as we can see, except his own individual associations. He is a man of letters; and a life destitute of literary pleasures seems insipid to him. He abhors the spirit of the present generation, the severity of its studies, the boldness of its inquiries, and the disdain with which it regards some old prejudices by which his own mind is held in bondage. He dislikes an utterly unenlightened age; he dislikes an investigating and reforming age. The first twenty years of the sixteenth century would have exactly suited him. They furnished just the quantity of intellectual excitement which he requires. The learned few read and wrote largely. A scholar was held in high estimation; but the rabble did not presume to think; and even the most inquiring and independent of the educated classes paid more reverence to authority, and less to reason, than is usual in our time. This is a state of things in which Mr. Southey would have found himself quite comfortable; and, accordingly, he pronounces it the happiest state of things ever known in the world.

The savages were wretched, says Mr. Southey; but the people in the time of Sir Thomas More were happier than either they or we. Now, we think it quite certain that we have the advantage over the contemporaries of Sir Thomas More, in every point in which they had any advantage over savages.

Mr. Southey does not even pretend to maintain that the people in the sixteenth century were better lodged or clothed than at present. He seems to admit that in these respects there has been some little improvement. It is indeed a matter about which scarcely any doubt can exist in the most perverse mind, that the improvements of machinery have lowered the price of manufactured articles, and have brought within the reach of the poorest some conveniences which Sir Thomas More or his master could not have obtained at any price.

The labouring classes, however, were, according to Mr. Southey, better fed three hundred years ago than at present. We believe that he is completely in error on this point. The condition of servants in noble and wealthy families, and of scholars at the Universities, must surely have been better in those times than that of common day-labourers; and we are sure that it was not better than that of our workhouse paupers. From the household book of the Northumberland family, we find that in one of the greatest establishments of the kingdom the servants lived almost entirely on salt meat, without any bread at all. A more unwholesome diet can scarcely be conceived. In the reign of Edward the Sixth, the state of the students at Cambridge is described to us, on the very best authority, as most wretched.

Many of them dined on pottage made of a farthing's worth of beef with a little salt and oatmeal, and literally nothing else. This account we have from a contemporary master of St. John's. Our parish poor now eat wheaten bread. In the sixteenth century the labourer was glad to get barley, and was often forced to content himself with poorer fare. In Harrison's introduction to Holinshed we have an account of the state of our working population in the 'golden days,' as Mr. Southey calls them, of good Queen Bess. 'The gentilitie,' says he, 'commonly provide themselves sufficiently of wheat for their own tables, whylest their household and poore neighbours in some shires are inforced to content themselves with rice or barleie; yea, and in time of dearth, many with bread made eyther of beanes, peason, or otes, or of altogether, and some acornes among. I will not say that this extremity is oft so well to be seen in time of plentie as of dearth; but if I should I could easily bring my trial: for albeit there be much more grounde eared nowe almost in everye place then hath beene of late yeares, yet such a price of corne continueth in eache towne and markete, without any just cause, that the artificer and poore labouring man is not able to reach unto it, but is driven to content himself with horse-corne; I mean beanes, peason, otes, tares, and lintelles.' We should like to see what the effect would be of putting any parish in England now on allowance of 'horse-corne.' The helotry of Mammon are not, in our day, so easily enforced to content themselves as the peasantry of that happy period, as Mr. Southey considers it, which elapsed between the fall of the feudal and the rise of the commercial tyranny.

'The people,' says Mr. Southey, 'are worse fed than when they were fishers.' And yet in another place he complains that they will not eat fish. 'They have contracted,' says he, 'I know not how, some obstinate prejudice against a kind of food at once wholesome and delicate, and everywhere to be obtained cheaply and in abundance, were the demand for it as general as it ought to be.' It is true that the lower orders have an obstinate prejudice against fish. But hunger has no such obstinate prejudices. If what was formerly a common diet is now eaten only in times of severe pressure, the inference is plain. The people must be fed with what they at least think better food than that of their ancestors.

The advice and medicine which the poorest labourer can now obtain, in disease or after an accident, is far superior to what Henry the Eighth could have commanded. Scarcely any part of the country is out of the reach of practitioners, who are probably not so far inferior to Sir Henry Hallford as they are superior to Sir Anthony Denny. That there has been a great improvement in this respect Mr. Southey allows. Indeed he could not well have denied it. 'But,' says he, 'the evils for which these sciences are the palliative have increased since the time of the Druids in a proportion that heavily overweighs the benefit of improved therapeutics.' We know nothing either of the diseases or the remedies of the Druids. But we are quite sure that the improvement of medicine has far more than kept pace with the increase of disease during the last three centuries. This is proved by the best possible evidence. The term of human life is decidedly longer in England than in any former age, respecting which we possess any information on which we can rely. All the rants in the world about picturesque cottages and temples of Mammon will not shake this argument. No test of the state of society can be named so de-

cisive as that which is furnished by bills of mortality. That the lives of the people of this country have been gradually lengthening during the course of several generations is as certain as any fact in statistics, and that the lives of men should become longer and longer, while their physical condition, during life, is becoming worse and worse, is utterly incredible.

Let our readers think over these circumstances. Let them take into the account the sweating sickness and the plague. Let them take into the account that fearful disease which first made its appearance in the generation to which Mr. Southey assigns the palm of felicity, and raged through Europe with a fury at which the physician stood aghast, and before which the people were swept away by thousands. Let them consider the state of the northern counties, constantly the scene of robberies, rapes, massacres, and conflagrations. Let them add to all this the fact that seventy-two thousand persons suffered death by the hands of the executioner during the reign of Henry the Eighth, and judge between the nineteenth and the sixteenth century.

We do not say that the lower orders in England do not suffer severe hardships. But, in spite of Mr. Southey's assertions, and in spite of the assertions of a class of politicians, who, differing from Mr. Southey in every other point, agree with him in this, we are inclined to doubt whether they really suffer greater physical distress than the labouring classes of the most flourishing countries of the Continent.

It will scarcely be maintained that the lazzaroni who sleep under the porticos of Naples, or the beggars who besiege the convents of Spain, are in a happier situation than the English commonalty. The distress which has lately been experienced in the northern part of Germany, one of the best governed and most prosperous districts of Europe, surpasses, if we have been correctly informed, any thing which has of late years been known among us. In Norway and Sweden the peasantry are constantly compelled to mix bark with their bread, and even this expedient has not always preserved whole families and neighbourhoods from perishing together of famine. An experiment has lately been tried in the kingdom of the Netherlands, which has been cited to prove the possibility of establishing agricultural colonies on the waste lands of England; but which proves to our minds nothing so clearly as this, that the rate of subsistence to which the labouring classes are reduced in the Netherlands is miserably low, and very far inferior to that of the English paupers. No distress which the people here have endured for centuries approaches to that which has been felt by the French in our own time. The beginning of the year 1817 was a time of great distress in this island. But the state of the lowest classes here was luxury compared with that of the people of France. We find in Magendie's *Journal de Physiologie Experimentale*, a paper on a point of physiology connected with the distress of that season. It appears that the inhabitants of six departments, Aix, Jura, Doubs, Haute Saone, Vosges, and Saone et Loire, were reduced first to oat-meal and potatoes, and at last to nettles, bean-stalks, and other kinds of herbage fit only for cattle; that when the next harvest enabled them to eat barley-bread, many of them died from intemperate indulgence in what they thought an exquisite repast; and that a dropsy of a peculiar description was produced by the hard fare of the year. Dead bodies were found on the roads and in the fields. A single surgeon dissected six of these, and found the stomach shrunk, and filled with the unwhole-

some aliments which hunger had driven men to share with beasts. Such extremity of distress as this is never heard of in England, or even in Ireland. We are, on the whole, inclined to think, though we would speak with diffidence on a point on which it would be rash to pronounce a positive judgment without a much longer and closer investigation than we have bestowed upon it, that the labouring classes of this island, though they have their grievances and distresses, some produced by their own improvidence, some by the errors of their rulers, are on the whole better off as to physical comforts than the inhabitants of any equally extensive district of the old world. On this very account, suffering is more acutely felt and more loudly bewailed here than elsewhere. We must take into the account the liberty of discussion, and the strong interest which the opponents of a ministry always have to exaggerate the extent of the public disasters. There are many parts of Europe in which the people quietly endure distress that here would shake the foundations of the state,—in which the inhabitants of a whole province turn out to eat grass with less clamour than one Spital-fields weaver would make here if the overseers were to put him on barley-bread. In those new countries in which a civilized population has at its command a boundless extent of the richest soil, the condition of the labourer is probably happier than in any society which has lasted for many centuries. But in the old world we must confess ourselves unable to find any satisfactory record of any great nation, past or present, in which the working classes have been in a more comfortable situation than in England during the last thirty years. When this island was thinly peopled, it was barbarous. There was little capital; and that little was insecure. It is now the richest and the most highly civilized spot in the world; but the population is dense. Thus we have never known that golden age, which the lower orders in the United States are now enjoying. We have never known an age of liberty, of order, and of education, an age in which the mechanical sciences were carried to a great height, yet in which the people were not sufficiently numerous to cultivate even the most fertile valleys. But, when we compare our own condition with that of our ancestors, we think it clear that the advantages arising from the progress of civilization have far more than counterbalanced the disadvantages arising from the progress of population. While our numbers have increased tenfold, our wealth has increased a hundred fold. Though there are so many more people to share the wealth now existing in the country than there were in the sixteenth century, it seems certain, that a greater share falls to almost every individual than fell to the share of any of the corresponding class in the sixteenth century. The King keeps a more splendid court. The establishments of the nobles are more magnificent. The esquires are richer, the merchants are richer, the shopkeepers are richer. The serving-man, the artisan, and the husbandman have a more copious and palatable supply of food, better clothing, and better furniture. This is no reason for tolerating abuses, or for neglecting any means of ameliorating the condition of our poorer countrymen. But it is a reason against telling them, as some of our philosophers are constantly telling them, that they are the most wretched people who ever existed on the face of the earth.

We have already adverted to Mr. Southey's amusing doctrine about national wealth. A state, says he, cannot be too rich; but a people may be too rich. His reason for thinking this is extremely curious.

‘ A people may be too rich, because it is the tendency of the commercial, and more especially of the manufacturing system, to collect wealth rather than to diffuse it. Where wealth is necessarily employed in any of the speculations of trade, its increase is in proportion to its amount. Great capitalists become like pikes in a fish-pond, who devour the weaker fish ; and it is but too certain, that the poverty of one part of the people seems to increase in the same ratio as the riches of another. There are examples of this in history. In Portugal, when the high tide of wealth flowed in from the conquests in Africa and the East, the effect of that great influx was not more visible in the augmented splendour of the court, and the luxury of the higher ranks, than in the distress of the people.’

Mr. Southey’s instance is not a very fortunate one. The wealth which did so little for the Portuguese was not the fruit, either of manufactures or of commerce carried on by private individuals. It was the wealth, not of the people, but of the government and its creatures, of those who, as Mr. Southey thinks, can never be too rich. The fact is, that Mr. Southey’s proposition is opposed to all history, and to the phenomena which surround us on every side. England is the richest country in Europe, the most commercial, and the most manufacturing. Russia and Poland are the poorest countries in Europe. They have scarcely any trade, and none but the rudest manufactures. Is wealth more diffused in Russia and Poland than in England ? There are individuals in Russia and Poland whose incomes are probably equal to those of our richest countrymen. It may be doubted, whether there are not, in those countries, as many fortunes of eighty thousand a-year, as here. But are there as many fortunes of five thousand a-year, or of one thousand a-year ? There are parishes in England which contain more people of between five hundred and three thousand pounds a-year, than could be found in all the dominions of the Emperor Nicholas. The neat and commodious houses which have been built in London and its vicinity, for people of this class, within the last thirty years, would of themselves form a city larger than the capitals of some European kingdoms. And this is the state of society in which the great proprietors have devoured the smaller !

The cure which Mr. Southey thinks that he has discovered is worthy of the sagacity which he has shown in detecting the evil. The calamities arising from the collection of wealth in the hands of a few capitalists are to be remedied by collecting it in the hands of one great capitalist, who has no conceivable motive to use it better than other capitalists, — the all-devouring state.

It is not strange that, differing so widely from Mr. Southey as to the past progress of society, we should differ from him also as to its probable destiny. He thinks that, to all outward appearance, the country is hastening to destruction ; but he relies firmly on the goodness of God. We do not see either the piety or the rationality of thus confidently expecting that the Supreme Being will interfere to disturb the common succession of causes and effects. We, too, rely on his goodness, — on his goodness as manifested, not in extraordinary interpositions, but in those general laws which it has pleased him to establish in the physical and in the moral world. We rely on the natural tendency of the human intellect to truth, and on the natural tendency of society to improvement. We know no well authenticated instance of a people which has decidedly retrograded in civilization and prosperity, except from the

influence of violent and terrible calamities, — such as those which laid the Roman Empire in ruins, or those which, about the beginning of the sixteenth century, desolated Italy. We know of no country which, at the end of fifty years of peace and tolerably good government, has been less prosperous than at the beginning of that period. The political importance of a state may decline as the balance of power is disturbed by the introduction of new forces. Thus, the influence of Holland and of Spain is much diminished. But are Holland and Spain poorer than formerly? We doubt it. Other countries have outrun them. But we suspect that they have been positively, though not relatively, advancing. We suspect that Holland is richer than when she sent her navies up the Thames, — that Spain is richer than when a French king was brought captive to the footstool of Charles the Fifth.

History is full of the signs of this natural progress of society. We see in almost every part of the annals of mankind how the industry of individuals, struggling up against wars, taxes, famines, conflagrations, mischievous prohibitions, and more mischievous protections, creates faster than governments can squander, and repairs whatever invaders can destroy. We see the capital of nations increasing, and all the arts of life approaching nearer and nearer to perfection, in spite of the grossest corruption and the wildest profusion on the part of rulers.

The present moment is one of great distress. But how small will that distress appear when we think over the history of the last forty years; — a war, compared with which all other wars sink into insignificance; — taxation, such as the most heavily taxed people of former times could not have conceived; — a debt larger than all the public debts that ever existed in the world added together; — the food of the people studiously rendered dear; — the currency imprudently debased and imprudently restored. Yet is the country poorer than in 1790? We fully believe that, in spite of all the misgovernment of her rulers, she has been almost constantly becoming richer and richer. Now and then there has been a stoppage, now and then a short retrogression; but as to the general tendency there can be no doubt. A single breaker may recede, but the tide is evidently coming in.

If we were to prophesy that, in the year 1930, a population of fifty millions, better fed, clad, and lodged than the English of our time, will cover these islands, — that Sussex and Huntingdonshire will be wealthier than the wealthiest parts of the West Riding of Yorkshire now are, — that cultivation, rich as that of a flower garden, will be carried up to the very tops of Ben Nevis and Helvellyn, — that machines, constructed on principles yet undiscovered, will be in every house, — that there will be no highways but railroads, no travelling but by steam, — that our debt, vast as it seems to us, will appear to our great-grandchildren a trifling encumbrance, which might easily be paid off in a year or two, — many people would think us insane. We prophesy nothing; but this we say — If any person had told the Parliament which met in perplexity and terror after the crash in 1720, that in 1830 the wealth of England would surpass all their wildest dreams, — that the annual revenue would equal the principal of that debt which they considered as an intolerable burthen, — that for one man of 10,000*l.*, then living, there would be five men of 50,000*l.*, — that London would be twice as large and twice as populous, and that, nevertheless, the mortality would have diminished to one half what it then was, — that the post-office would bring more into the exchequer than the excise and customs had

brought in together under Charles II., — that stage coaches would run from London to York in twenty-four hours, — that men would sail without wind, and would be beginning to ride without horses, — our ancestors would have given as much credit to the prediction as they gave to *Gulliver's Travels*. Yet the prediction would have been true; and they would have perceived that it was not altogether absurd, if they had considered that the country was then raising every year a sum which would have purchased the fee-simple of the revenue of the Plantagenets — ten times what supported the government of Elizabeth — three times what, in the time of Oliver Cromwell, had been thought intolerably oppressive. To almost all men the state of things under which they have been used to live seems to be the necessary state of things. We have heard it said that five per cent. is the natural interest of money, that twelve is the natural number of a jury, that forty shillings is the natural qualification of a county voter. Hence it is, that though in every age every body knows that, up to his own time, progressive improvement has been taking place, nobody seems to reckon on any improvement during the next generation. We cannot absolutely prove that those are in error who tell us that society has reached a turning point — that we have seen our best days. But so said all who came before us, and with just as much apparent reason. A million a-year will beggar 'us,' said the patriots of 1640. 'Two millions a-year will grind the country to powder,' was the cry in 1660. 'Six millions a-year, and a debt of fifty millions!' exclaimed Swift — 'the high allies have been the ruin of us!' 'A hundred and forty millions of debt!' said Junius — 'well may we say that we owe Lord Chatham more than we shall ever pay, if we owe him such a load as this.' 'Two hundred and forty millions of debt!' cried all the statesmen of 1783 in chorus — 'what abilities, or what economy on the part of a minister, can save a country so burdened?' We know that if, since 1783, no fresh debt had been incurred, the increased resources of the country would have enabled us to defray that burden at which Pitt, Fox, and Burke stood aghast — to defray it over and over again, and that with much lighter taxation than what we have actually borne. On what principle is it that, when we see nothing but improvement behind us, we are to expect nothing but deterioration before us?

It is not by the intermeddling of Mr. Southey's idol — the omniscient and omnipotent State — but by the prudence and energy of the people, that England has hitherto been carried forward in civilization; and it is to the same prudence and the same energy that we now look with comfort and good hope. Our rulers will best promote the improvement of the people by strictly confining themselves to their own legitimate duties — by leaving capital to find its most lucrative course, commodities their fair price, industry and intelligence their natural reward, idleness and folly their natural punishment — by maintaining peace, by defending property, by diminishing the price of law, and by observing strict economy in every department of the state. Let the Government do this: the People will assuredly do the rest.

SPIRIT OF SOCIETY IN ENGLAND AND FRANCE.*

THE French and the English can no longer be accused of that mutual contempt which furnishes the preliminary ground of remark to the writer of the agreeable work before us. After a jealousy of eight hundred years, we have begun to conquer our prejudices and recant our opinions; and we are now contented to glean from the customs and manners of our neighbours benefits somewhat more important than the innovations in caps, or the improvements in cookery, which formed pretty nearly the limits of that portion of our forefathers' ambition which was devoted to the imitation of our 'hereditary foes.' Late events have put the finishing stroke to popular prejudice; and we have now, of two extremes, rather to guard against the desire blindly to copy, than the resolution zealously to condemn. Those national sentiments, 'grave, with a bright disdain,' of *Monsieur* and *soupe maigre*, which give so patriotic a character to the British Theatre, never more will awaken a sympathising gallery to 'the loud collision of applauding hands.' But the character of the people, and the spirit of society, in the two countries, are still, in many respects, remarkably different. When a French mob are excited, they clamour for glory — when an English mob are inclined to be riotous, they are thirsty for beer. At a contested election, the feelings of the working classes must necessarily be strongly excited. The harangues to their understandings — the addresses to their interests — the artifices for their affections — the congregating together — the conference — the discussion — the dispute — the spirit of party, — these, if any emotions, might well be supposed to call forth the man from himself, to excite, to their inmost depth, his generous as well as angry sympathies, and warming him from all selfish considerations, to hurry him into even a blind and rash devotion for the cause he adopts, and a disdain, which no lure can soften, for that which he opposes. And so, indeed, to the uninitiated spectator it may appear; but how generally is that noisy ardour the result of a purchase — how many, in such a time and in such scenes, will grow inebriate on the hospitality of one, with the intention of voting for another — how large the number of those to whom you speak of retrenchment and reform, who remain unmoved till the bribe is hinted, and the vote, callous to the principles, is suborned by the purse! When, in the late general election, a patriotic adventurer was engaged in attempting to open (as the phrase is) a close borough, one of his most strenuous supporters, declaiming on the vileness of the few privileged voters in receiving thirty pounds each for their votes, added, with the air of a man of delicate conscience, — 'But if you open the borough, sir, we will do it for five!'

But leaving, for the present, the graver discussions connected with the effects of our civil institutions, it is our intention to make a few observations on that Spirit of Society which is formed among the higher classes, and imitated among those possessing less aristocratical distinction.

* A comparative View of the Social Life of England and France, from the Restoration of Charles the Second to the French Revolution. By the Editor of Madame du Diffand's Letters. Octavo. London, 1828.—Vol. lii. page 374. January, 1831.

The great distinction of *fashion* in France, as it was — and in England, as it is — we consider to be this. In the former country the natural advantages were affected, in the latter we covet the acquired. There the aspirants to fashion pretended to wit — here they pretend to wealth. In this country, from causes sufficiently obvious, social reputation has long been measured by the extent of a rent-roll; respectability has been another word for money; and the point on which competitors have been the most anxious to vie with each other has been that exact point in which personal merit can have the least possible weight in the competition. The ambition of the French gallant, if devoted to a frivolous object, was at least more calculated to impress society with a graceful and gay tone than the inactive and unrelieved ostentation of the English pretender. And those circles to which a *bon mot* was the passport could scarcely fail to be more agreeable than circles in which, to be the most courted, it is sufficient to be the first-born. A Frenchman had, at least, one intellectual incentive to his social ambition; — to obtain access to the most fashionable, was to obtain access to the most pleasant, the most witty circles in his capital. But to enjoy the most difficult society of London is to partake of the insipidity of a decorated and silent crowd, or the mere sensual gratification of a costly dinner.

To give acerbity to the tone of our fashion — while it is far from increasing its refinement — there is a sort of negative opposition made by the titled aristocrats to that order, from which it must be allowed the majority have sprung themselves. Descended, for the most part, from the unpedigreed rich, they affect to preserve from that class, circles exclusive and impassable. Fashion to their heaven is like the lotus to Mahomet's; it is at once the ornament and the barrier. To the opulent, who command power, they pretend, while worshipping opulence, to deny *ton*: a generation passes, and the proscribed class have become the exclusive. ‘Si le financier manque son coup, les courtisans disent de lui, — c’est un bourgeois, un homme de rien, un malôtru: S’il réussit, ils lui demandent sa fille.’* This mock contest, in which riches ultimately triumph, encourages the rich to a field in which they are ridiculous till they conquer; and makes the one race servile, that the race succeeding may earn the privilege to be insolent. If the merchant or the banker has the sense to prefer the station in which he is respectable, to attempting success in one that destroys his real eminence, while it apes a shadowy distinction, his wife, his daughters, his son in the Guards, are not often so wise. If one class of the great remain aloof, another class are sought, partly to defy, and partly to decoy; — and ruinous entertainments are given, not for the sake of pleasure, but with a prospective yearning to the columns of the *Morning Post*. They do not relieve dullness, but they render it pompous; and instead of suffering wealth to be the commander of enjoyment, they render it the slave to a vanity, that, of all the species of that unquiet passion, is the most susceptible to pain. Circles there are in London, in which to be admitted is to be pleased and to admire; but those circles are composed of persons above the fashion or aloof from it. Of those where that tawdry deity presides, would it be extravagant to say that existence is a course of strife, subserviency, hypocrisy, meanness, ingratitude, insolence, and

* *Les Caractères de LA BRUYERE.*

mortification; and that to judge of the motives which urge to such a life, we have only to imagine the wish to be everywhere in the pursuit of nothings?

Fashion in this country is also distinguished from her sister in France, by our want of social enthusiasm for genius. It showed, not the power of appreciating his talents, but a capacity for admiring the more exalted order of talents, (which we will take leave to say is far from a ridiculous trait in national character,) that the silent and inelegant Hume was yet in high request in the brilliant coteries of Paris. In England, the enthusiasm is for distinction of a more sounding kind. Were a great author to arrive in London, he might certainly be neglected; but a petty prince could not fail of being eagerly courted. A man of that species of genius which amuses—not exalts—might indeed create a momentary sensation. The oracle of science—the discoverer of truth, might be occasionally asked to the *soirées* of some noble Mæcenas; but every drawing-room, for one season at least, would be thrown open to the new actress, or the imported musician. Such is the natural order of things in our wealthy aristocracy, among whom there can be as little sympathy with those who instruct, as there must be gratitude to those who entertain, till the entertainment has become the prey of satiety, and the hobbyhorse of the new season replaces the rattle of the last.

Here, we cannot but feel the necessity of subjecting our gallantry to our reason, and inquiring how far the indifference to what is great, and the passion for what is frivolous, may be occasioned by the present tone of that influence which women necessarily exercise in this country, as in all modern civilized communities. Whoever is disposed to give accurate attention to the constitution of fashion (which fashion in the higher classes is, in other words, the spirit of society,) must at once perceive how largely that fashion is formed, and how absolutely it is governed, by the gentler sex. Our fashion may indeed be considered the aggregate of the opinions of our women. In order to account for the tone that fashion receives, we have but to inquire into the education bestowed upon women. Have we, then, instilled into them those public principles (as well as private accomplishments) which are calculated to ennoble opinion, and to furnish their own peculiar inducements of reward to a solid and lofty merit in the opposite sex? Our women are divided into two classes—the domestic and the dissipated. The latter employ their lives in the pettiest intrigues, or at best, in a round of vanities that usurp the name of amusements. Women of the highest rank alone take much immediate share in politics; and that share, it must be confessed, brings any thing but advantage to the state. No one will assert that these soft aspirants have any ardour for the public—any sympathy with measures that are pure and unselfish. No one will deny that they are the first to laugh at principles, which, it is but just to say, the education we have given them precludes them from comprehending,—and to excite the parental emotions of the husband, by reminding him that the advancement of his sons requires interest with the Minister. The domestic class of women are not now, we suspect, so numerous as they have been esteemed by speculators on our national character. We grant their merits at once; and we inquire if the essence of these merits be not made to consist in the very refraining from an attempt

to influence public opinion, — in the very ignorance of all virtues connected with the community; — if we shall not be told that the proper sphere of woman is private life, and the proper limit to her virtues, the private affections. Now, were it true that women did not influence public opinion, we should be silent on the subject, and subscribe to all those charming commonplaces on retiring modesty and household attractions that we have so long been accustomed to read and hear. But we hold that feminine influence, however secret, is unavoidably great; and, owing to this lauded ignorance of public matters, we hold it also to be unavoidably corrupt. It is clear that women of the class we speak of, attaching an implied blame to the exercise of the reasoning faculty, are necessarily the reservoir of unexamined opinions and established prejudices, — that those opinions and prejudices colour the education they give to their children, and the advice they bestow upon their husbands. We allow them to be the soothing companion and the tender nurse — (these are admirable merits — these are all their own) — but, in an hour of wavering between principle and interest, on which side would their influence lie? — would they inculcate the shame of a pension, or the glory of a sacrifice to the public interest? On the contrary, how often has the worldly tenderness of the mother been the secret cause of the tarnished character and venal vote of the husband; or, to come to a pettier source of emotion, how often has a wound, or an artful pampering, to some feminine vanity, led to the renunciation of one party advocating honest measures, or the adherence to another subsisting upon courtly intrigues! In more limited circles, how vast that influence in forming the national character, which you would deny because it is secret! — how evident a proof of the influence of those whose minds you will not enlarge, in that living which exceeds means, — so pre-eminently English — so wretched in its consequences — so paltry in its object! Who shall say that the whole comfortless, senseless, heartless system of ostentation which pervades society has no cause — not in women, if you like — but in the education we give them?

We are far from wishing that women, of what rank soever, should intermeddle with party politics, or covet the feverish notoriety of state intrigues, any more than we wish they should possess the universal genius ascribed to Lady Anne Clifford by Dr. Donne, and be able to argue on all subjects ‘from predestination to slea silk.’ We are far from desiring them to neglect one domestic duty, or one household tie; but we say — for women as for men — there is no sound or true morality, where there is no knowledge of — no devotion to — public virtue. In the education women receive, we would enlarge their ideas to the comprehension of political integrity; and in the variety of events with which life tries the honesty of men, we would leave to those principles we have inculcated — unpolluted as they would be by the close contagion of party — undisturbed by the heat and riot of action — that calm influence, which could then scarcely fail to be as felicitous and just as we deem it now not unoften unhappy and dishonouring. But of all the inducements to female artifice and ambition, our peculiar custom of selling our daughters to the best advantage is the most universal. We are a match-making nation. The system in France, and formerly existent in this country, of betrothing children, had at least with us one good effect among many bad. If unfriendly to chastity in France,

it does not appear to have produced so pernicious an effect in England; but while it did not impair the endearments of domestic life, it rendered women less professionally hollow and designing at that period of life when love ceases to encourage deceit; it did not absorb their acutest faculties in a game in which there is no less hypocrisy requisite than in the amours of a Dorimont or a Belinda—but without the excuse of the affections. While this custom increases the insincerity of our social life, it is obvious that it must re-act also on its dulness; for wealth and rank being the objects sought, are the objects courted; and thus, another reason is given for crowding our circles with important stolidity, and weeding them of persons poor enough to be agreeable—and because agreeable—dangerous and unwelcome.

Would we wish, then, the influence of women to be less? We will evade the insidious question—We wish it to be differently directed. By contracting their minds, we weaken ourselves; by cramping their morality, we ruin our own; as we ennoble their motives, society will rise to a loftier tone—and even Fashion herself may be made to reward glory as well as frivolity. Nay, we shall not even be astonished if it ultimately encourages, with some portion of celebrity and enthusiasm, the man who has refused a bribe, or conferred some great benefit on his country, as well as the idol of Crockford's or the heir to a dukedom.

It is somewhat remarkable, that that power of ridicule so generally cultivated as a science in France has scarcely exercised over the tone of feeling in that country so repressing an influence as it has among ourselves. It never destroyed in the French the love of theatrical effect; and even in the prevalence of those heartless manners formed under the old *régime*, it never deterred them from avowing romantic feeling, if uttered in courtly language. Nay, it was never quite out of fashion to affect a gallant sentiment or a generous emotion; and the lofty verse of Corneille was echoed with enthusiasm by the courtiers of a Bourbon, and the friends of a Pompadour. But here, a certain measured and cold demeanour has been too often coupled with the disposition to sneer not only at expressions that are exaggerated, but at sentiments that are noble. Profligacy in action surprises, shocks, less than the profession of exalted motives, uttered in conversation, when, as a witty orator observed, ‘the reporters are shut out, and there is no occasion “to humbug.”’ We confess that we think it a bad sign when lofty notions are readily condemned as bombast, and when a nation not much addicted to levity, or even liveliness, is, above all others, inclined to ridicule the bias to magnify and exalt. A shoeblack of twelve years old, plying his trade by the Champs Elysées, was struck by a shoeblack four years younger. He was about to return the blow—an old fruitwoman arrested his arm, exclaiming—‘Have you then no greatness of soul!’ Nothing could be more bombastic than the reproof. Granted. But who shall say how far such bombast influenced the magnanimity of the labouring classes in that late event, which was no less a revolution in France, than the triumph of the human species? Exaggeration of sentiment can rarely, as a national trait, be dangerous. With men of sense it unavoidably settles into greatness of mind; but moral debasement,—a sneer for what is high,—a disbelief of what is good, is the very worst symptom a people can display.

The influence which it is the natural province of the Drama to exert towards the exalting the standard of sentiment and opinion is not, at

this time, it will readily be allowed, very efficacious in counterbalancing the worldly and vulgar tendency to degrade. Tragedy sleeps side by side with the Epic; and the loftier shapes of Comedy have dwindled into Farce, that most dwarfish imp of all the varieties of dramatic humour. The stage seems even to have relinquished the most common, though not the least moral, of its prerogatives, viz. to hold the mirror to existing customs, and to correct folly by exhibiting it. We question, indeed, whether that power has ever been largely exercised — whether the drama has ever visibly and truly bodied forth the image of the times — since the plastic and unappreciated genius of Jonson adapted his various knowledge of the past to a portraiture of his own period, even too individual and exact. The Restoration — so pernicious for the most part to what was most excellent in political truths — was little more favourable to whatsoever was noble in the provinces of literary fiction. The stage was lowered to clumsy and graceless imitations from the French, and reflected the grossness and vice of the court — not the manners or morals of that people over whom the contagion of the court was far from extensive. Seeking its food from a form of society, artificial alike in its vices and its customs, the Comedy of that day, despite its lavish and redundant wit, rarely touched upon a single chord dedicated to simplicity or nature. And to believe that the literary Aretins — the dramatizing Don Raphaels of the Restoration — represented or influenced their age, were to believe that they found, or made, the countrymen of Vane and Bradshaw, of Falkland and of Derby, a community of sharpers rioting in a metropolis of brothels. The remarkable contrast that the delicate and somewhat emasculate refinement of the celebrated Periodicals in the reign of Anne present to the indecency even then characteristic of the stage, and the universal and instantaneous impression they produced — so far deeper than that created by any of the licentious comedies of the day — will be quite sufficient to convince those who remember that the brilliancy and rapidity of literary success are proportioned to the exactness with which the literary effort accords with some popular train of feeling deeply felt, but not hitherto commonly expressed, that the stage did not, at that period, represent the manners of the contemporaries of Addison much more faithfully than, in the preceding times, it had reflected the tone of feeling common to the contemporaries of Russell and Sidney. Coming to a period nearer the present, it can scarcely be asserted that even the exquisite humour of Goldsmith, or still less the artificial and exuberant wit of Sheridan, were exercised in giving a very peculiar and marked representation of their times; whatever they might effect in exhibiting certain aspects of society, as common in one nation of Europe as another. Since the masterpieces of their genius, the attempt to show ‘the form and pressure of the age’ has not been made with any tolerable success. And should any novelty (not arising from the claims of the *actor*) now attract to the theatre — we must thank Germany for a superstition — France for a farce — Siam for an elephant — or England for a scene. The influence attributed of old to the stage has passed into new directions: Novels represent manners, and Periodicals opinions. The higher, the more abstruse, the more extended branches of morals, are but slightly and feebly cultivated. Thus, little of general influence is left to that part of literature which *teaches* — save what may be exercised by publications adapted to the immediate necessity, prejudice, or

caprice of the times, and by cheap works addressed to the people,—elementary, if intended for their understanding — declamatory, if for their passions.

It would be a matter of speculation deserving a larger notice than we can afford it here, to inquire how far our national literature is influenced by the place which our literary men hold in society. That men of letters do not enjoy in England their legitimate and proper rank is a common and trite complaint. There is, doubtless, something equivocal in their station. An English author of but moderate eminence at home, is often astonished at the respect paid to him abroad. Political power — the chief object of desire with us — leaves to that direction of intellect which does not command it but a moderate and lukewarm homage. Fashion may indeed invest the new author with a momentary éclat; but the 'lion' loses his novelty, and the author ceases to be courted. We recollect to have heard one of the most brilliant and successful writers of the day exclaim, that he would rather, for the gratification of social vanity, be a dull, but officious, member of Parliament, than enjoy his own high and popular reputation as an author. The vanity of authors is not, then, confined to their profession, which does not bring them a reward sufficiently palpable and present. Led, like the rest of their countrymen, by the rage of fashion, they long for the reputation of being admitted to brilliant society, rather than the consideration accorded to them in literary circles. One effect, at least, not favourable to the higher and purer branches of composition, is produced by this uneasiness and yearning. Straining for the effect, the glitter, or the novelty that will render them 'the fashion,' they give to literature a feverish and exaggerated cast. They grasp at the humour, sometimes the frivolity, of the moment, and endeavour to hurry the serene and dignified glories of literature into a succession of 'lucky hits.' Two other effects noticeable, we think, among Englishmen of letters, may be derived from the same cause. First, the want of that social brilliancy which is generally the characteristic of a Frenchman eminent in literature. When one of our most popular moralists observed, 'that he never knew a man of sense a general favourite,' he uttered a sentiment peculiarly adapted to charm the English. In France every man of sense would have aspired to be a general favourite, and every man of literary distinction might have won easily enough to that ambition. But here intellect alone does not produce fashion, and the author, failing to attain it, affects the privilege of railing, and the right to be disappointed. This dissatisfaction at the place destined to the nature of his exertions — this consciousness of enjoying neither that station of honour, nor that method of being honoured, which he has been taught to covet — is almost necessarily destructive to the self-confidence and self-complacency, without which no man makes a great proficiency in the graces of society, or the courageous profession of a wit. The second effect, produced by the desire to shine in other circles than their own, is, we think, visible in the scattered and desultory manner with which our literary men encounter each other; they do not herd closely together. There is not among them that intimate knot and union which was, and is, characteristic of the authors and *beaux esprits* of Paris, and produces so remarkable an influence on their works, — giving to their philosophy the graces of animated conversation, and colouring their style with that air of life, and fulness of *worldly* knowledge, which, whatever be the changes and caprices of their literature,

invariably remain, sometimes the staple, and almost always the predominant characteristic. When Helvetius produced that celebrated work, so rich in anecdote, illustration, and isolated brilliancies of remark, he was accused of merely collecting, and forming into a whole, the opinions current in the circles with which he mixed every day. It would be somewhat difficult for an English philosopher to subject himself, with any semblance of justice, to a similar accusation.

It would be a little unjust to quit our subject without saying any thing upon what we consider improvements in the condition of society; the more especially, as some points, that appear to us worthy of praise, have been the subject of vulgar complaint. We hear, for instance, much pathetic lamentation on the decline of country hospitality, at a time when that 'first cousin to a virtue' seems more deserving of commendation than at any period referred to by its detractors.

In what did the hospitality of the last century consist? An interchange of dinner visits between country neighbours,—a journey some half a dozen miles over wretched roads, and a return home some eight hours afterwards, with the footman drunk, the coachman more drunk, and the master most drunk. Hospitality, in a word, was a profusion of port wine; and the host welcomed his friends by ruining their constitutions. Houses, much less conveniently arranged than at present, were not often capable of affording accommodation, for days together, to visitors from a distance. Few, comparatively speaking, were the guests who found their way from the metropolis to these rustic receptacles of Silenus; and the strangers were then stared at for their novelty, or ridiculed for their refinement—oracles to the silly and butts to the brutal. What an improvement in the present tone of country hospitality! Instead of solemn celebrations of inebriety—instead of jolting at one hour through the vilest of lanes, to return at another from the most senseless of revels,—improved roads facilitate the visits of neighbours, improved houses accommodate a greater number of guests, and an improved hospitality gives to both a welcome reception, without endangering their health or making war on their reason. The visitors are more numerous; the victims less. To give a dinner, or to receive a gentleman from London, are not the events in a squire's life that they were in the last century. At stated periods of the year the house is filled with persons who can be cultivated as well as manly; and improvements in opinions are thus circulated throughout the country, as well as improvements in gun-locks.

So far, indeed, from the tone of society in the country being, as formerly, considerably below that in the metropolis, it is now perhaps more graceful and courteous. The host, dissatisfied with his station in London, beholds his acres and his hall, rises into a great man in his province, and, content with the tokens of his own consequence, naturally grows complaisant to others. The petty vying and the paltry cringing are no longer necessary—the heartburn of fashion ceases—there is no compromise of comfort and nature for the attainment of wearisome and artificial objects; even the coldness, the distraction, and the formality incident to London coteries, subside with the causes; and that tone of general equality which the most courtly circles can alone establish in a capital, becomes the easy and natural characteristic of the manners in a country mansion.

Another main feature in the aspect of society is the improvement and multiplicity of Clubs. That the luxuries of these houses render

husbands less domestic, and impart to sons notions disproportionate to their fortune, have been made very common and vulgar grounds of attack. With regard to the first, we will own frankly that that mere animal habit which would confine men to the narrow circle of their firesides, and render it a misdemeanour to seek rational intercourse abroad, might, we think, be lessened, without operating in any way to the disadvantage of society. But, in fact, so rigid a domesticity exists little among the classes for which clubs are as yet chiefly instituted. We fear that at those witching hours of night, in which the gentleman is at his club, the lady and her daughter, so far from deploring his absence at home, are enjoying themselves at the ball or the *soirée*. The latter charge is equally ridiculous. That all men are not rich enough to enjoy a good house, airy rooms, new publications, the constant society of their acquaintances, and the decent pleasures of the table, is a grievance very much to be lamented ; but that when men can obtain these advantages without being rich, there should be any harm in enjoying them, because they are not rich, or that they should be more discontented with a small room, because they have the power of quitting it for a large room whenever they please, are notions in metaphysics with which we cannot agree. Besides, while the principle of a club is economy, its temptations are not those of extravagance ; while a young man is enabled by its organization to save half his income, he meets there little that could allure him to spend the other half. The more attached he becomes to the quiet and orderly habits of a club life, the less he will feel inclined towards the expenses of that dissipation to which the routine of a club life is so opposed. A third objection, sometimes urged against clubs, would be serious indeed, were it generally founded in truth, viz. the custom of gaming. But gaming is not practised in the great majority of clubs, especially those lately established. In the few notorious for the support of that vice, the usual advantages of a club, viz. economy, the facility of intellectual conversation, &c., are not found ; they are gaming-houses, in a word, with a more specious name ; and we willingly surrender them, without a word of defence, to the indignation of their impugnors.

The increase of clubs we think favourable to the growth of public principle. By the habits of constant intercourse, truths circulate, and prejudices are frittered away. ‘ Nothing,’ observes that great writer*, in whom we scarcely know which to admire the most, the brilliant imagination, or the quiet rationality—‘ nothing more contributes to maintain ‘ our common sense than living in the universal way with multitudes of ‘ men ;’ and, let us add, that it not only maintains our common sense, but diminishes the selfishness of our motives. In the close circle of private life, public matters are rarely and coldly discussed. In public, they form the chief topic ; and made interesting, first as the staple of conversation, they assume, at length, an interest and a fascination in themselves.

We cannot quit our subject without adverting to that tone of consideration and respect towards the great bulk of the people, which especially characterizes the present time, and was almost a stranger to the past. Even in the antient democracies, in which the flattery of the people was the science of power,—even among the later Paladins of Chivalry,—‘ rough to the haughty, but gentle to the low ’—mirrors

* Goethe.

not less of courtesy than valour—the tone alike of literature and philosophy breathes with a high contempt for the emotions and opinions of the vulgar. Among the Greeks—the crowd—the herd—the people—their fickleness—their violence—their ingratitude, furnished the favourite matter to scornful maxims and lordly apophthegms. Taking their follies and their vices as the common subject for notice, where do we find their virtues panegyricized, or their characters dispassionately examined? And in the models of chivalry, the ‘doffing to the low’ was but the insult of condescension; the humble were not to be insulted, because they were not to be feared. But the instant the aspirer of plebeian birth attempted to rise against the decrees of fortune, the instant he affected honour or distinction, he was ‘audacious varlet,’ and ‘presuming caitiff.’ The tender and accomplished author of the *Arcadia*, that noble work in which Chivalry appears in its most romantic and lovely shape, evidently esteems it the proof of a thoughtful and lofty mind, to disdain the multitude and rise beyond a regard for their opinion. Were it not something profane to accuse so glorious a benefactor as Shakespeare of any offence, it might, perhaps, be justly observed, that while his works abound with pithy sarcasms on the foibles of the common people, they have never brought into a strong light their nobler qualities; even the virtues accorded them are the mere virtues of servants, and rarely aspire beyond fidelity to a master in misfortune. While, in his mighty page, the just and impartial mirror has been held to almost every human secret of character among the higher and middle classes of life, how little have the motives and conduct of the great mass (beyond what are contemptible) been sifted and examined; how many opportunities* of displaying their firmness, their fortitude, their resistance to oppression, of sympathizing with their misfortunes and their wrongs, have been passed over in silence, or devoted rather to satire than to praise! But not now, thank God, is it the mode, the cant, to affect a disdain of the vast majority of our fellow creatures,—an unthinking scorn for their opinions or pursuits: the philosophy of past times confused itself with indifference; the philosophy of the present rather seeks to be associated with philanthropy.

It may be worth while to some future inquirer to ascertain what share of the general disposition to which we refer may be attributed to writers now little remembered, and, in their own time, not unjustly condemned. It is the glorious doom of literature, that the evil perishes and the good remains. Even when the original author of some healthy and useful truth is forgotten, the truth survives, transplanted to works more calculated to purify it from error, and perpetuate it to our benefit. Nor can we tell how much we now owe of the tendency to enlighten and consult the people—how much of broad and rational opinion—to certain heated and vague enthusiasts of the last century. Time has consigned to oblivion the wild theories and the licentious morals that clouded, in their works, the temper towards benevolence and the desire of freedom. But time has ripened what was no less the characteristic of their writings—a disposition to unrobe the ‘solemn plausibilities’ that hid their interests from the people; to reduce to its just estimate the value of military glory; to direct analysis to the end and nature of governments, and to consider above the rest those classes of society hitherto the most contemned. Amidst the tumults and portents of the

* In the Historical Plays.

time, we hail this disposition as the best safeguard to one order, and the surest augury to the other; in proportion as it increases, society triumphs against whatever may oppose its welfare in prejudice or in custom; reform becomes at once tranquil and universal; the necessity of revolutions is superseded, and what once was enforced by violence, is effected by opinion.

Meanwhile, in whatsoever channels may be open to the honest ambition of literature, we trust that those who have the power to influence the bias of popular sentiment will inculcate what has too long been the subject of jest or incredulity, viz. the glory of promoting public interests; and the necessity, in order to bring virtue from the Hearth to the Forum, of calling forth from their present obscurity and neglect those rewards to exertion, which confer, if they be but rightly considered, a deeper respect than wealth, and an honour more lofty than titles.*

* The following Essays, with many others of minor importance, were intended to form additions to those already selected on Miscellaneous Literature. I find however that I have already exceeded the space allotted to this valuable department. On the Literature of the Greeks and Romans, extracted from a brilliant review of Madame de Stael's work on the Influence of Literature, Vol. xxi. page 24, and well known to be the production of Mr. Jeffrey.—An exceedingly interesting and learned Criticism on Madame de Stael's celebrated book on Germany, attributed in various publications to Sir James Mackintosh. Vol. xxii. page 199.—A curious History of the Commentators on Dante, composed by *Ugo Foscolo*, a man of first-rate genius and extensive acquirements. Vol. xxix. page 453. — An admirable Contribution to an early number of the E. Review from one of its first and most eminent writers, the late Francis Horner Esq. I allude to his clear and argumentative review of Dugald Stewart's Statement of Facts respecting the Appointment of Mr. Leslie to the Situation of Mathematical Professor in the University of Edinburgh. Vol. vii. page 113.—A Sketch of the History of Roman Literature, written by Dr. Brown, late Editor of the Caledonian Mercury, and the author of several excellent papers in the E. Review, Vol. xl. page 375; and an Essay on the Character and Authorship of the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*. Vol. liii. page 180.

PART FOURTH.

EDUCATION.

INQUIRY INTO THE UTILITY OF CLASSICAL LEARNING.*

THERE are several feelings to which attention must be paid, before the question of classical learning can be fairly and temperately discussed.

We are apt, in the first place, to remember the immense benefits which the study of the classics once conferred on mankind; and to feel for those models on which the taste of Europe has been formed something like sentiments of gratitude and obligation. This is all well enough, so long as it continues to be a mere feeling; but, as soon as it interferes with action, it nourishes dangerous prejudices about education. Nothing will do in the pursuit of knowledge, but the blackest ingratitude; — the moment we have got up the ladder, we must kick it down; — as soon as we have passed over the bridge, we must let it rot; — when we have got upon the shoulders of the antients, we must look over their heads. The man who forgets the friends of his childhood in real life is base; but he who clings to the props of his childhood in literature must be content to remain as ignorant as he was when a child. His business is to forget, disown, and deny — to think himself above every thing which has been of use to him in time past — and to cultivate that exclusively from which he expects future advantage: in short, to do every thing for the advancement of his knowledge, which it would be infamous to do for the advancement of his fortune. If mankind still derive advantage from classical literature proportionate to the labour they bestow upon it, let their labour and their study proceed; but the moment we cease to read Latin and Greek for the solid utility we derive from them, it would be a very romantic application of human talents to do so from any feeling of gratitude, and recollection of past service.

To almost every Englishman up to the age of three or four-and-twenty, classical learning has been the great object of existence; and no man is very apt to suspect, or very much pleased to hear, that what he has done for so long a time was not worth doing. His classical literature, too, reminds every man of the scenes of his childhood, and brings to his fancy several of the most pleasing associations which we are capable of forming. A certain sort of vanity, also, very naturally grows among men occupied in a common pursuit. Classical quotations are the watchwords of scholars, by which they distinguish each other from the ignorant and illiterate; and Greek and Latin are insensibly become almost the only test of a cultivated mind.

Some men through indolence, others through ignorance, and most through necessity, submit to the established education of the times; and seek for their children that species of distinction which happens,

* Edgeworth's Professional Education.—Vol. xv. page 41. October, 1809.

at the period in which they live, to be stamped with the approbation of mankind. This mere question of convenience, every parent must determine for himself. A poor man, who has his fortune to gain, must be a quibbling theologian, or a classical pedant, as fashion dictates; and he must vary his error with the error of the times. But it would be much more fortunate for mankind if the public opinion, which regulates the pursuits of individuals, were more wise and enlightened than it at present is.

All these considerations make it extremely difficult to procure a candid hearing on this question; and to refer this branch of education to the only proper criterion of every branch of education — its utility in future life.

There are two questions which grow out of this subject; 1st, How far is any sort of classical education useful? 2d, How far is that particular classical education adopted in this country useful?

Latin and Greek are, in the first place, useful, as they inure children to intellectual difficulties, and make the life of a young student what it ought to be, a life of considerable labour. We do not, of course, mean to confine this praise exclusively to the study of Latin and Greek; or to suppose that other difficulties might not be found which it would be useful to overcome: but though Latin and Greek have this merit in common with many arts and sciences, still they have it; and, if they do nothing else, they at least secure a solid and vigorous application at a period of life which materially influences all other periods.

To go through the grammar of one language thoroughly is of great use for the mastery of every other grammar; because there obtains, through all languages, a certain analogy to each other in their grammatical construction. Latin and Greek have now mixed themselves etymologically with all the languages of modern Europe — and with none more than our own; so that it is necessary to read these two tongues for other objects than themselves.

The two antient languages are as mere inventions — as pieces of mechanism incomparably more beautiful than any of the modern languages of Europe: their mode of signifying time and case by terminations, instead of auxiliary verbs and particles, would of itself stamp their superiority. Add to this, the copiousness of the Greek language, with the fancy, majesty, and harmony of its compounds; and there are quite sufficient reasons why the classics should be studied for the beauties of language. Compared to them, merely as vehicles of thought and passion, all modern languages are dull, ill contrived, and barbarous.

That a great part of the Scriptures have come down to us in the Greek language is of itself a reason, if all others were wanting, why education should be planned so as to produce a supply of Greek scholars.

The cultivation of style is very justly made a part of education. Every thing which is written is meant either to please or to instruct. The second object it is difficult to effect, without attending to the first; and the cultivation of style is the acquisition of those rules and literary habits which sagacity anticipates, or experience shows, to be the most effectual means of pleasing. Those works are the best which have longest stood the test of time, and pleased the greatest number of exercised minds. Whatever, therefore, our conjectures may be, we cannot

be so sure that the best modern writers can afford us as good models as the antients ; — we cannot be certain that they will live through the revolutions of the world, and continue to please in every climate—under every species of government—through every stage of civilization. The moderns have been well taught by their masters ; but the time is hardly yet come when the necessity for such instruction no longer exists. We may still borrow descriptive power from Tacitus ; dignified perspicuity from Livy ; simplicity from Cæsar ; and from Homer some portion of that light and heat which, dispersed into ten thousand channels, has filled the world with bright images and illustrious thoughts. Let the cultivator of modern literature addict himself to the purest models of taste which France, Italy, and England could supply, he might still learn from Virgil to be majestic, and from Tibullus to be tender ; he might not yet look upon the face of nature as Theocritus saw it ; nor might he reach those springs of pathos with which Euripides softened the hearts of his audience. In short, it appears to us, that there are so many excellent reasons why a certain number of scholars should be kept up in this and in every civilized country, that we should consider every system of education from which classical education was excluded as radically erroneous, and completely absurd.

That vast advantages, then, may be derived from classical learning, there can be no doubt. The advantages which are derived from classical learning by the English manner of teaching involve another and a very different question ; and we will venture to say, that there never was a more complete instance in any country of such extravagant and overacted attachment to any branch of knowledge, as that which obtains in this country with regard to classical knowledge. A young Englishman goes to school at six or seven years old ; and he remains in a course of education till twenty-three or twenty-four years of age. In all that time, his sole and exclusive occupation is learning Latin and Greek* ; he has scarcely a notion that there is any other kind of excellence ; and the great system of facts with which he is the most perfectly acquainted are the intrigues of the Heathen Gods ; — with whom Pan slept ? — with whom Jupiter ? — whom Apollo ravished ? These facts the English youth get by heart the moment they quit the nursery ; and are most sedulously and industriously instructed in them till the best and most active part of life is passed away. Now, this long career of classical learning, we may, if we please, denominate a foundation ; but it is a foundation so far above ground, that there is absolutely no room to put any thing upon it. If you occupy a man with one thing till he is twenty-four years of age, you have exhausted all his leisure time : he is called into the world, and compelled to act ; or is surrounded with pleasures, and thinks and reads no more. If you have neglected to put other things in him, they will never get in afterwards ; — if you have fed him only with words, he will remain a narrow and limited being to the end of his existence.

The bias given to men's minds is so strong, that it is no uncommon thing to meet with Englishmen, whom, but for their grey hairs and wrinkles, we might easily mistake for schoolboys. Their talk is of Latin verses ; and it is quite clear, if men's ages are to be dated from the

* Unless he goes to the University of Cambridge ; and then classics occupy him entirely for about ten years ; and divide him with mathematics for four or five more.

state of their mental progress, that such men are eighteen years of age, and not a day older. Their minds have been so completely possessed by exaggerated notions of classical learning, that they have not been able in the great school of the world to form any other notion of real greatness. Attend, too, to the public feelings — look to all the terms of applause. A learned man! — a scholar! — a man of erudition! Upon whom are these epithets of approbation bestowed? Are they given to men acquainted with the science of government? thoroughly masters of the geographical and commercial relations of Europe? — to men who know the properties of bodies, and their action upon each other? No; this is not learning; it is chemistry or political economy — not learning. The distinguishing abstract term, the epithet of Scholar, is reserved for him who writes on the *Œolic* reduplication, and is familiar with Sylburgius his method of arranging defectives in ω and μ . The picture which a young Englishman, addicted to the pursuit of knowledge, draws — his *beau idéal* of human nature — his top and consummation of man's powers — is a knowledge of the Greek language. His object is not to reason, to imagine, or to invent; but to conjugate, decline, and derive. The situations of imaginary glory which he draws for himself, are the detection of an anapæst in the wrong place, or the restoration of a dative case which Cranzius had passed over, and the never dying Ernesti failed to observe. If a young classic of this kind were to meet the greatest chemist, or the greatest mechanician, or the most profound political economist of his time, in company with the greatest Greek scholar, would the slightest comparison between them ever come across his mind? — would he ever dream that such men as Adam Smith and Lavoisier were equal in dignity of understanding to, or of the same utility as, Bentley and Heyné? We are inclined to think, that the feeling excited would be a good deal like that which was expressed by Dr. George about the praises of the great King of Prussia, who entertained considerable doubts whether the King, with all his victories, knew how to conjugate a Greek verb in μ .

Another misfortune of classical learning, as taught in England, is that scholars have come, in process of time, and from the effects of association, to love the instrument better than the end; — not the luxury which the difficulty encloses, but the difficulty; — not the filbert, but the shell; — not what may be read in Greek, but Greek itself. It is not so much the man who has mastered the wisdom of the antients, that is valued, as he who displays his knowledge of the vehicle in which that wisdom is conveyed. The glory is to show I am a scholar. The good sense and ingenuity I may gain by my acquaintance with antient authors is matter of opinion; but if I bestow an immensity of pains upon a point of accent or quantity, this is something positive: I establish my pretensions to the name of Scholar, and gain the credit of learning, while I sacrifice all its utility.

Another evil in the present system of classical education is the extraordinary perfection which is aimed at in teaching those languages: a needless perfection; an accuracy which is sought for in nothing else. There are few boys who remain to the age of eighteen or nineteen at a public school, without making above ten thousand Latin verses; — a greater number than is contained in the *Æneid*: and after he has made this quantity of verses in a dead language, unless the poet should happen to be a very weak man indeed, he never makes another as long as he lives. It may be urged, and it is urged, that this is of use in

teaching the delicacies of the language. No doubt it is of use for this purpose, if we put out of view the immense time and trouble sacrificed in gaining these little delicacies. It would be of use that we should go on till fifty years of age making Latin verses, if the price of a whole life were not too much to pay for it. We effect our object; but we do it at the price of something greater than our object. And whence comes it, that the expenditure of life and labour is totally put out of the calculation, when Latin and Greek are to be attained? In every other occupation, the question is fairly stated between the attainment, and the time employed in the pursuit;—but in classical learning, it seems to be sufficient if the least possible good is gained by the greatest possible exertion; if the end is any thing, and the means every thing. It is of some importance to speak and write French; and innumerable delicacies would be gained by writing ten thousand French verses: but it makes no part of our education to write French poetry. It is of some importance that there should be good botanists; but no botanist can repeat, by heart, the names of all the plants in the known world; nor is any astronomer acquainted with the appellation and magnitude of every star in the map of the heavens. The only department of human knowledge in which there can be no excess, no arithmetic, no balance of profit and loss, is classical learning.

The prodigious honour in which Latin verses are held at public schools is surely the most absurd of all absurd distinctions. You rest all reputation upon doing that which is a natural gift, and which no labour can attain. If a lad won't learn the words of a language, his degradation in the school is a very natural punishment for his disobedience or his indolence; but it would be as reasonable to expect, that all boys should be witty, or beautiful, as that they should be poets. In either case, it would be to make an accidental, unattainable, and not a very important gift of nature, the only, or the principal, test of merit. This is the reason why boys, who make a very considerable figure at school, so very often make no figure in the world;—and why other lads, who are passed over without notice, turn out to be valuable important men. The test established in the world is widely different from that established in a place which is presumed to be a preparation for the world; and the head of a public school, who is a perfect miracle to his contemporaries, finds himself shrink into absolute insignificance, because he has nothing else to command respect or regard but a talent for fugitive poetry in a dead language.

The present state of classical education cultivates the imagination a great deal too much, and other habits of mind a great deal too little; and trains up many young men in a style of elegant imbecility, utterly unworthy of the talents with which nature has endowed them. It may be said, there are profound investigations, and subjects quite powerful enough for any understanding, to be met with in classical literature. So there are; but no man likes to add the difficulties of a language to the difficulties of a subject; and to study metaphysics, morals, and politics in Greek, when the Greek alone is study enough without them. In all foreign languages, the most popular works are works of imagination. Even in the French language, which we know so well, for one serious work which has any currency in this country, we have twenty which are mere works of imagination. This is still more true in classical literature; because what their poets and orators have left us

is of infinitely greater value than the remains of their philosophy ; for, as society advances, men think more accurately and deeply, and imagine more tamely ; works of reasoning advance, and works of fancy decay. So that the matter of fact is, that a classical scholar of twenty-three or twenty-four years of age is a man principally conversant with works of imagination. His feelings are quick, his fancy lively, and his taste good. Talents for speculation and original inquiry he has none ; nor has he formed the invaluable habit of pushing things up to their first principles, or of collecting dry and unamusing facts as the materials of reasoning. All the solid and masculine parts of his understanding are left wholly without cultivation ; he hates the pain of thinking, and suspects every man whose boldness and originality call upon him to defend his opinions and prove his assertions.

A very curious argument is sometimes employed in justification of the learned minutiae to which all young men are doomed, whatever be their propensities in future life. What are you to do with a young man up to the age of seventeen ?—Just as if there was such a want of difficulties to overcome, and of important tastes to inspire, that from the mere necessity of doing something, and the impossibility of doing any thing else, you were driven to the expedient of metre and poetry ;—as if a young man within that period might not acquire the modern languages, modern history, experimental philosophy, geography, chronology, and a considerable share of mathematics ;—as if the memory of things was not more agreeable, and more profitable, than the memory of words.

The great objection is, that we are not making the most of human life, when we constitute such an extensive and such minute classical erudition an indispensable article in education. Up to a certain point we would educate every young man in Latin and Greek ; but to a point far short of that to which this species of education is now carried. Afterwards, we would grant to classical erudition as high honours as to every other department of knowledge, but not higher. We would place it upon a footing with many other objects of study ; but allow to it no superiority. Good scholars would be as certainly produced by these means, as good chemists, astronomers, and mathematicians are now produced, without any direct provision whatsoever for their production. Why are we to trust to the diversity of human tastes, and the varieties of human ambition, in every thing else, and distrust it in classics alone ? The passion for languages is just as strong as any other literary passion. There are very good Persian and Arabic scholars in this country. Large heaps of trash have been dug up from Sanscrit ruins. We have seen, in our own times, a clergyman of the University of Oxford complimenting their Majesties in Coptic and Syrophœnician verses ; and yet we doubt whether there will be a sufficient avidity in literary men to get at the beauties of the finest writers which the world has yet seen ; and though the *Bagvat Gheeta* has (as can be proved) met with human beings to translate, and other human beings to read it, we think that, in order to secure an attention to Homer and Virgil, we must catch up every man—whether he is to be a clergyman or a duke ;—begin with him at six years of age, and never quit him till he is twenty ; making him conjugate and decline for life and death ; and so teaching him to estimate his progress in real wisdom, as he can scan the verses of the Greek tragedians.

The English clergy, in whose hands education entirely rests, bring up the first young men of the country as if they were all to keep

grammar schools in little country towns; and a nobleman, upon whose knowledge and liberality the honour and welfare of his country may depend, is diligently worried, for half his life, with the small pedantry of longs and shorts. There is a timid and absurd apprehension, on the part of ecclesiastical tutors, of letting out the minds of youth upon difficult and important subjects. They fancy that mental exertion must end in religious scepticism; and, to preserve the principles of their pupils, they confine them to the safe and elegant imbecility of classical learning. A genuine Oxford tutor would shudder to hear his young men disputing upon moral and political truth, forming and pulling down theories, and indulging in all the boldness of youthful discussion. He would augur nothing from it but impiety to God, and treason to kings. And yet, who vilifies both more than the holy poltroon, who carefully averts from them the searching eye of reason, and who knows no better method of teaching the highest duties than by extirpating the finest qualities and habits of the mind? If our religion is a fable, the sooner it is exploded the better. If our government is bad, it should be amended. But we have no doubt of the truth of the one, or of the excellence of the other; and are convinced that both will be placed on a firmer basis in proportion as the minds of men are more trained to the investigation of truth. At present, we act with the minds of our young men, as the Dutch did with their exuberant spices. An infinite quantity of talent is annually destroyed in the Universities of England, by the miserable jealousy and littleness of ecclesiastical instructors. It is in vain to say we have produced great men under this system. We have produced great men under all systems. Every Englishman must pass half his life in learning Latin and Greek; and classical learning is supposed to have produced the talents which it has not been able to extinguish. It is scarcely possible to prevent great men from rising up under any system of education, however bad. Teach men dæmonology or astrology, and you will still have a certain portion of original genius, in spite of these or any other branches of ignorance and folly.

There is a delusive sort of splendour in a vast body of men pursuing one object, and thoroughly obtaining it; and yet, though it is very splendid, it is far from being useful. Classical literature is the great object* at Oxford. Many minds, so employed, have produced many works, and much fame in that department; but if all liberal arts and sciences useful to human life had been taught there,—if some had dedicated themselves to chemistry, some to mathematics, some to experimental philosophy,—and if every attainment had been honoured in the mixt ratio of its difficulty and utility,—the system of such an University would have been much more valuable, but the splendour of its name something less.

When an University has been doing useless things for a long time, it appears at first degrading to them to be useful. A set of lectures upon political economy would be discouraged in Oxford, probably despised, probably not permitted. To discuss the enclosure of commons, and to dwell upon imports and exports,—to come so near to common life, would seem to be undignified and contemptible. In the same manner, the Parr, or the Bentley of his day, would be scandalized in an Uni-

* We speak merely of reputation. Sad, indeed, is the fate of this University, if its object has been classical literature alone; and it has failed even in that.

versity to be put on a level with the discoverer of a neutral salt : and yet, what other measure is there of dignity in intellectual labour but usefulness ? And what ought the term University to mean, but a place where every science is taught which is liberal, and at the same time useful to mankind ? Nothing would so much tend to bring classical literature within proper bounds as a steady and invariable appeal to utility in our appreciation of all human knowledge. The puffed up pedant would collapse into his proper size ; and the maker of verses, and the rememberer of words, would soon assume that station which is the lot of those who go up unbidden to the upper places of the feast.

We should be sorry, if what we have said should appear too contemptuous towards classical learning, which we most sincerely hope will always be held in great honour in this country, though we certainly do not wish to it that exclusive honour which it at present enjoys. A great classical scholar is an ornament, and an important acquisition to his country ; but, in a place of education, we would give to all knowledge an equal chance for distinction ; and would trust to the varieties of human disposition, that every science worth cultivation would be cultivated. Looking always to real utility as our guide, we should see, with equal pleasure, a studious and inquisitive mind arranging the productions of nature, investigating the qualities of bodies, or mastering the difficulties of the learned languages. We should not care whether he were chemist, naturalist, or scholar ; because we know it to be as necessary that matter should be studied, and subdued to the use of man, as that taste should be gratified, and imagination inflamed.

In those who were destined for the church, we would undoubtedly encourage classical learning, more than in any other body of men ; but if we had to do with a young man going out into Public Life, we would exhort him to condemn, or at least not to affect, the reputation of a great scholar, but to educate himself for the offices of civil life. He should learn what the constitution of his country really was,—how it had grown into its present state,—the perils that had threatened it,—the malignity that had attacked it,—the courage that had fought for it, and the wisdom that had made it great. We would bring strongly before his mind the characters of those Englishmen who have been the steady friends of the public happiness ; and, by their examples, would breathe into him a pure public taste, which should keep him untainted in all the vicissitudes of political fortune. We would teach him to burst through the well-paid and the pernicious cant of indiscriminate loyalty ; and to know his Sovereign only as he discharged those duties, and displayed those qualities, for which the blood and the treasure of his people are confided to his hands. We should deem it of the utmost importance, that his attention was directed to the true principles of legislation,—what effect laws can produce upon opinions, and opinions upon laws,—what subjects are fit for legislative interference, and when men may be left to the management of their own interests ;—the mischief occasioned by bad laws, and the perplexity which arises from numerous laws,—the causes of national wealth,—the relations of foreign trade,—the encouragement of manufactures and agriculture,—the fictitious wealth occasioned by paper credit,—the laws of population,—the management of poverty and mendicity,—the use and abuse of monopoly,—the theory of taxation,—the consequences of the public debt. These are some of the subjects, and some of the branches of civil education, to which we would turn the minds of future Judges,

future Senators, and future Noblemen. After the first period of life had been given up to the cultivation of the classics, and the reasoning powers were now beginning to evolve themselves, these are some of the propensities in study which we would endeavour to inspire. Great knowledge, at such a period of life, we could not convey; but we might fix a decided taste for its acquisition, and a strong disposition to respect it in others. The formation of some great scholars we should certainly prevent, and hinder many from learning what, in a few years, they would necessarily forget; but this loss would be well repaid,—if we could show the future rulers of the country that thought and labour which it requires to make a nation happy,—or if we could inspire them with that love of public virtue, which, after religion, we most solemnly believe to be the brightest ornament of the mind of man.*

FEMALE EDUCATION. †

A GREAT deal has been said of the original difference of capacity between men and women; as if women were more quick, and men more judicious — as if women were more remarkable for delicacy of association, and men for stronger powers of attention. All this, we confess, appears to us very fanciful. That there is a difference in the understandings of the men and the women we every day meet with, every body, we suppose, must perceive; but there is none surely which may not be accounted for by the difference of circumstances in which they have been placed, without referring to any conjectural difference of original conformation of mind. As long as boys and girls run about in the dirt, and trundle hoops together, they are both precisely alike. If you catch up one half of these creatures, and train them to a particular set of actions and opinions, and the other half to a perfectly opposite set, of course their understandings will differ, as one or the other sort of occupations has called this or that talent into action. There is surely no occasion to go into any deeper or more abstruse reasoning in order to explain so very simple a phenomenon. Taking it, then, for granted, that nature has been as bountiful of understanding to one sex as the other, it is incumbent on us to consider what are the principal objections commonly made against the communication of a greater share of knowledge to women than commonly falls to their lot at present; for though it may be doubted whether women should learn all that men learn, the immense disparity which now exists between their knowledge, we should hardly think could admit of any rational defence. It is not easy to imagine that there can be any just cause why a woman of forty should be more ignorant than a boy of twelve years of age. If there be any good at all in female ignorance, this (to use a very colloquial phrase) is surely too much of a good thing.

* On the subject of this Essay, further remarks may be found in Vol. xiv. page 188. Vol. xvi. page 178. Vol. xxxv. page 302. Vol. xlvii. page 439.

† Broadhurst's Advice to Young Ladies on the Improvement of the Mind.—Vol. xv. page 299. January, 1810.

Something in this question must depend, no doubt, upon the leisure which either sex enjoys for the cultivation of their understandings ; — and we cannot help thinking, that women have fully as much, if not more idle time upon their hands, than men. Women are excluded from all the serious business of the world : men are lawyers, physicians, clergymen, apothecaries, and justices of the peace — sources of exertion which consume a great deal more time than producing and suckling children ; so that, if the thing is a thing that ought to be done — if the attainments of literature are objects really worthy the attention of females, they cannot plead the want of leisure as an excuse for indolence and neglect. The lawyer who passes his day in exasperating the bickerings of Roe and Doe is certainly as much engaged as his lady who has the whole of the morning before her to correct the children and pay the bills. The apothecary, who rushes from an act of phlebotomy in the western parts of the town to insinuate a bolus in the east, is surely as completely absorbed as that fortunate female who is darning the garment, or preparing the repast of her *Æsculapius* at home ; and, in every degree and situation of life, it seems that men must necessarily be exposed to more serious demands upon their time and attention than can possibly be the case with respect to the other sex. We are speaking always of the fair demands which ought to be made upon the time and attention of women ; for, as the matter now stands, the time of women is considered as worth nothing at all. Daughters are kept to occupations in sewing, patching, mantuamaking, and mending, by which it is impossible they can earn tenpence a day. The intellectual improvement of women is considered to be of such subordinate importance, that twenty pounds paid for needle work would give to a whole family leisure to acquire a fund of real knowledge. They are kept with nimble fingers and vacant understandings, till the season for improvement is utterly passed away, and all chance of forming more important habits completely lost. We do not therefore say that women have more leisure than men, if it be necessary they should lead the life of artisans ; but we make this assertion only upon the supposition, that it is of some importance women should be instructed ; and that many ordinary occupations, for which a little money will find a better substitute, should be sacrificed to this consideration.

We bar, in this discussion, any objection which proceeds from the mere novelty of teaching women more than they are already taught. It may be useless that their education should be improved, or it may be pernicious ; and these are the fair grounds on which the question may be argued. But those who cannot bring their minds to consider such an unusual extension of knowledge, without connecting with it some sensation of the ludicrous, should remember, that, in the progress from absolute ignorance, there is a period when cultivation of mind is new to every rank and description of persons. A century ago, who would have believed that country gentlemen could be brought to read and spell with the ease and accuracy which we now so frequently remark, — or supposed that they could be carried up even to the elements of antient and modern history ? Nothing is more common, or more stupid, than to take the actual for the possible — to believe that all which is, is all which can be ; first to laugh at every proposed deviation from practice as impossible — then, when it is carried into effect, to be astonished that it did not take place before.

It is said, that the effect of knowledge is to make women pedantic and affected; and that nothing can be more offensive than to see a woman stepping out of the natural modesty of her sex, to make an ostentatious display of her literary attainments. This may be true enough; but the answer is so trite and obvious, that we are almost ashamed to make it. All affectation and display proceed from the supposition of possessing something better than the rest of the world possesses. Nobody is vain of possessing two legs and two arms; — because that is the precise quantity of either sort of limb which every body possesses. Who ever heard a lady boast that she understood French? — for no other reason, that we know of, but because every body in these days does understand French; and though there may be some disgrace in being ignorant of that language, there is little or no merit in its acquisition. Diffuse knowledge generally among women, and you will at once cure the conceit which knowledge occasions while it is rare. Vanity and conceit we shall of course witness in men and women as long as the world endures: but by multiplying the attainments upon which these feelings are founded, you increase the difficulty of indulging them, and render them much more tolerable, by making them the proofs of a much higher merit. When learning ceases to be uncommon among women, learned women will cease to be affected.

A great many of the lesser and more obscure duties of life necessarily devolve upon the female sex. The arrangement of all household matters, and the care of children in their early infancy, must of course depend upon them. Now, there is a very general notion, that the moment you put the education of women upon a better footing than is at present, at that moment there will be an end of all domestic economy; and that, if you once suffer women to eat of the tree of knowledge, the rest of the family will very soon be reduced to the same kind of aerial and unsatisfactory diet. These, and all such opinions, are referable to one great and common cause of error; — that man does every thing, and that nature does nothing; and that every thing we see is referable to positive institution, rather than to original feeling. Can any thing, for example, be more perfectly absurd than to suppose, that the care and perpetual solicitude which a mother feels for her children depends upon her ignorance of Greek and Mathematics; and that she would desert an infant for a quadratic equation? We seem to imagine, that we can break in pieces the solemn institution of nature by the little laws of a boarding-school; and that the existence of the human race depends upon teaching women a little more or a little less; — that Cimmerian ignorance can aid parental affection, or the circle of arts and sciences produce its destruction. In the same manner, we forget the principles upon which the love of order, arrangement, and all the arts of economy depend. They depend not upon ignorance nor idleness; but upon the poverty, confusion, and ruin which would ensue from neglecting them. Add to these principles, the love of what is beautiful and magnificent, and the vanity of display; — and there can surely be no reasonable doubt, but that the order and economy of private life is amply secured from the perilous inroads of knowledge.

We would fain know, too, if knowledge is to produce such baneful effects upon the material and the household virtues, why this influence has not already been felt? Women are much better educated now than they were a century ago; but they are by no means less remark-

able for attention to the arrangements of their household, or less inclined to discharge the offices of parental affection. It would be very easy to show, that the same objection has been made at all times to every improvement in the education of both sexes, and all ranks,—and been as uniformly and completely refuted by experience. A great part of the objections made to the education of women are rather objections made to human nature than to the female sex; for it is surely true, that knowledge, where it produces any bad effects at all, does as much mischief to one sex as to the other,—and gives birth to fully as much arrogance, inattention to common affairs, and eccentricity among men, as it does among women. But it by no means follows, that you get rid of vanity and self-conceit because you get rid of learning. Self-complacency can never want an excuse; and the best way to make it more tolerable, and more useful, is to give to it as high and as dignified an object as possible. But at all events, it is unfair to bring forward against a part of the world an objection which is equally powerful against the whole. When foolish women think they have any distinction, they are apt to be proud of it; so are foolish men. But we appeal to any one who has lived with cultivated persons of either sex, whether he has not witnessed as much pedantry, as much wrongheadedness, as much arrogance, and certainly a great deal more rudeness, produced by learning in men than in women: therefore, we should make the accusation general — or dismiss it altogether; though, with respect to pedantry, the learned are certainly a little unfortunate, that so very emphatic a word, which is occasionally applicable to all men embarked eagerly in any pursuit, should be reserved exclusively for them: for, as pedantry is an ostentatious obtrusion of knowledge, in which those who hear us cannot sympathize, it is a fault of which soldiers, sailors, sportsmen, gamesters, cultivators, and all men engaged in a particular occupation, are quite as guilty as scholars; but they have the good fortune to have the vice only of pedantry,—while scholars have both the vice, and the name for it too.

Some persons are apt to contrast the acquisition of important knowledge with what they call simple pleasures; and deem it more becoming that a woman should educate flowers, make friendships with birds, and pick up plants, than enter into more difficult and fatiguing studies. If a woman has no taste and genius for higher occupations, let her engage in these, to be sure, rather than remain destitute of any pursuit. But why are we necessarily to doom a girl, whatever be her taste or her capacity, to one unvaried line of petty and frivolous occupation? If she is full of strong sense and elevated curiosity, can there be any reason why she should be diluted and enfeebled down to a mere culler of simples, and fancier of birds?—why books of history and reasoning are to be torn out of her hand, and why she is to be sent, like a butterfly, to hover over the idle flowers of the field? Such amusements are innocent to those whom they can occupy; but they are not innocent to those who have too powerful understandings to be occupied by them. Light broths and fruits are innocent food only to weak or to infant stomachs; but they are poison to that organ in its perfect and mature state. But the great charm appears to be in the word *simplicity*—simple pleasures! If by a simple pleasure is meant an innocent pleasure, the observation is best answered by showing, that the pleasure which results from the acquisition of important knowledge is quite as innocent as any pleasure whatever: but if by a simple pleasure is meant one, the

cause of which can be easily analyzed, or which does not last long, or which in itself is very faint, then simple pleasures seem to be very nearly synonymous with small pleasures; and if the simplicity were to be a little increased, the pleasure would vanish altogether.

As it is impossible that every man should have industry or activity sufficient to avail himself of the advantages of education, it is natural that men who are ignorant themselves should view, with some degree of jealousy and alarm, any proposal for improving the education of women. But such men may depend upon it, however the system of female education may be exalted, that there will never be wanting a due proportion of failures; and that after parents, guardians, and preceptors have done all in their power to make every body wise, there will still be a plentiful supply of women who have taken special care to remain otherwise; and they may rest assured, if the utter extinction of ignorance and folly is the evil they dread, that their interests will always be effectually protected, in spite of every exertion to the contrary.

We must in candour allow, that those women who begin will have something more to overcome than may probably hereafter be the case. We cannot deny the jealousy which exists among pompous and foolish men respecting the education of women. There is a class of pedants, who would be cut short in the estimation of the world a whole cubit, if it were generally known that a young lady of eighteen could be taught to decline the tenses of the middle voice, or acquaint herself with the *Æolic* varieties of that celebrated language. Then women have, of course, all ignorant men for enemies to their instruction, who being bound (as they think), in point of sex, to know more, are not well pleased, in point of fact, to know less. But, among men of sense and liberal politeness, a woman, who has successfully cultivated her mind, without diminishing the gentleness and propriety of her manners, is always sure to meet with a respect and attention bordering upon enthusiasm.

There is in either sex a strong and permanent disposition to appear agreeable to the other: and this is the fair answer to those who are fond of supposing that a higher degree of knowledge would make women rather the rivals than the companions of men. Presupposing such a desire to please, it seems much more probable, that a common pursuit should be a fresh source of interest, than a course of contention. Indeed, to suppose that any mode of education can create a general jealousy and rivalry between the sexes, is so very ridiculous, that it requires only to be stated in order to be refuted. The same desire of pleasing secures all that delicacy and reserve which are of such inestimable value to women. We are quite astonished, in hearing men converse on such subjects, to find them attributing such beautiful effects to ignorance. It would appear, from the tenor of such objections, that ignorance had been the great civilizer of the world. Women are delicate and refined, only because they are ignorant;—they manage their household, only because they are ignorant;—they attend to their children, only because they know no better. Now, we must really confess, we have all our lives been so ignorant as not to know the value of ignorance. We have always attributed the modesty and the refined manners of women, to their being well taught in moral and religious duty,—to the hazardous situation in which they are placed,—to that perpetual vigilance which it is their duty to exercise over thought, word, and action,—and to that cultivation of the mild virtues, which those who cultivate the stern and magnanimous virtues expect at their hands. After all,

let it be remembered, we are not saying there are no objections to the diffusion of knowledge among the female sex. We would not hazard such a proposition respecting any thing ; but we are saying, that, upon the whole, it is the best method of employing time ; and that there are fewer objections to it than to any other method. There are, perhaps, 50,000 females in Great Britain who are exempted by circumstances from all necessary labour : but every human being must do something with their existence ; and the pursuit of knowledge is, upon the whole, the most innocent, the most dignified, and the most useful method of filling up that idleness, of which there is always so large a portion in nations far advanced in civilization. Let any man reflect, too, upon the solitary situation in which women are placed,—the ill-treatment to which they are sometimes exposed, and which they must endure in silence, and without the power of complaining,—and he must feel convinced that the happiness of a woman will be materially increased in proportion as education has given to her the habit and the means of drawing her resources from herself.

There are a few common phrases in circulation, respecting the duties of women, to which we wish to pay some degree of attention, because they are rather inimical to those opinions which we have advanced on this subject. Indeed, independently of this, there is nothing which requires more vigilance than the current phrases of the day, of which there are always some resorted to in every dispute, and from the sovereign authority of which it is often vain to make any appeal. ‘ The true theatre for a woman is the sick chamber ; ’—‘ Nothing so honourable to a woman as not to be spoken of at all.’ These two phrases, the delight of *Noodledom*, are grown into common places upon the subject ; and are not unfrequently employed to distinguish that love of knowledge in women, which, in our humble opinion, it is of so much importance to cherish. Nothing, certainly, is so ornamental and delightful in women as the benevolent virtues ; but time cannot be filled up, and life employed, with high and impassioned virtues. Some of these feelings are of rare occurrence—all of short duration—or nature would sink under them. A scene of distress and anguish is an occasion where the finest qualities of the female mind may be displayed ; but it is a monstrous exaggeration to tell women that they are born only for scenes of distress and anguish. Nurse father, mother, sister, and brother, if they want it ;—it would be a violation of the plainest duties to neglect them. But, when we are talking of the common occupations of life, do not let us mistake the accidents for the occupations ;—when we are arguing how the twenty-three hours of the day are to be filled up, it is idle to tell us of those feelings and agitations, above the level of common existence, which may employ the remaining hour. Compassion, and every other virtue, are the great objects we all ought to have in view ; but no man (and no woman) can fill up the twenty-four hours by acts of virtue. But one is a lawyer, and the other a ploughman, and the third a merchant ; and then, acts of goodness, and intervals of compassion and fine feeling, are scattered up and down the common occupations of life. We know women are to be compassionate ; but they cannot be compassionate from eight o’clock in the morning till twelve at night ;—and what are they to do in the interval ? This is the only question we have been putting all along, and is all that can be meant by literary education.

Then, again, as to the notoriety which is incurred by literature.—The cultivation of knowledge is a very distinct thing from its publication; nor does it follow that a woman is to become an author, merely because she has talent enough for it. We do not wish a lady to write books,—to defend and reply,—to squabble about the tomb of Achilles, or the plain of Troy,—any more than we wish her to dance at the opera, to play at a public concert, or to put pictures in the exhibition, because she has learned music, dancing, and drawing. The great use of her knowledge will be, that it contributes to her private happiness. She may make it public; but it is not the principal object which the friends of female education have in view. Among men, the few who write bear no comparison to the many who read. We hear most of the former, indeed, because they are, in general, the most ostentatious part of literary men; but there are innumerable men, who, without ever laying themselves before the public, have made use of literature to add to the strength of their understandings, and to improve the happiness of their lives. After all, it may be an evil for ladies to be talked of: but we really think those ladies who are talked of only as Miss Edgeworth, Mrs. Barbauld, and Mrs. Hamilton are talked of, may bear their misfortunes with a very great degree of Christian patience; and such singular examples of ill fortune may perhaps render the school of adversity a little more popular than it is at present.

Their exemption from all the necessary business of life is one of the most powerful motives for the improvement of education in women. Lawyers and physicians have in their professions a constant motive to exertion; if you neglect their education, they must in a certain degree educate themselves by their commerce with the world: they must learn caution, accuracy, and judgment, because they must incur responsibility. But if you neglect to educate the mind of a woman, by the speculative difficulties which occur in literature, it can never be educated at all: if you do not effectually rouse it by education, it must remain for ever languid. Uneducated men may escape intellectual degradation; uneducated women cannot. They have nothing to do; and if they come untaught from the schools of education, they will never be instructed in the school of events.

Women have not their livelihood to gain by knowledge; and that is one motive for relaxing all those efforts which are made in the education of men. They certainly have not; but they have happiness to gain, to which knowledge leads as probably as it does to profit; and that is a reason against mistaken indulgence. Besides, we conceive the labour and fatigue of accomplishments to be quite equal to the labour and fatigue of knowledge; and that it takes quite as many years to be charming as it does to be learned.

Another difference of the sexes is, that women are attended to, and men attend. All acts of courtesy and politeness originate from the one sex, and are received by the other. We can see no sort of reason, from this diversity of condition, for giving to women a trifling and insignificant education; but we see in it a very powerful reason for strengthening their judgment, and inspiring them with the habit of employing time usefully. We admit many striking differences in the situation of the two sexes, and many striking differences of understanding, proceeding from the different circumstances in which they are placed: but there is not a single difference of this kind which does

not afford a new argument for making the education of women better than it is. They have nothing serious to do ; — is that a reason why they should be brought up to do nothing but what is trifling ? They are exposed to greater dangers ; — is that a reason why their faculties are to be purposely and industriously weakened ? They are to form the characters of future men ; — is that a cause why their own characters are to be broken and frittered down as they now are ? In short, there is not a single trait in that diversity of circumstances, in which the two sexes are placed, that does not decidedly prove the magnitude of the error we commit in neglecting (as we do neglect) the education of women.

If the objections against the better education of women could be overruled, one of the great advantages that would ensue would be the extinction of innumerable follies. A decided and prevailing taste for one or another mode of education there must be. A century past, it was for housewifery — now it is for accomplishments. The object now is, to make women artists, — to give them an excellence in drawing, music, painting, and dancing, — of which, persons who make these pursuits the occupation of their lives, and derive from them their subsistence, need not be ashamed. Now, one great evil of all this is, that it does not last. If the whole of life, as somebody says, were an olympic game, — if we could go on feasting and dancing to the end, — this might do ; but this is merely a provision for the little interval between coming into life, and settling in it ; while it leaves a long and dreary expanse behind, devoid both of dignity and cheerfulness. No mother, no woman who has passed over the few first years of life, sings, or dances, or draws, or plays upon musical instruments. These are merely means for displaying the grace and vivacity of youth, which every woman gives up, as she gives up the dress and the manners of eighteen : she has no wish to retain them ; or, if she has, she is driven out of them by diameter and derision. The system of female education, as it now stands, aims only at embellishing a few years of life, which are in themselves so full of grace and happiness, that they hardly want it ; and then leaves the rest of existence a miserable prey to idle insignificance. No woman of understanding and reflection can possibly conceive she is doing justice to her children by such kind of education. The object is, to give to children resources that will endure as long as life endures, — habits that time will ameliorate, not destroy, — occupations that will render sickness tolerable, solitude pleasant, age venerable, life more dignified and useful, and therefore death less terrible : and the compensation which is offered for the omission of all this, is a shortlived blaze, — a little temporary effect, which has no other consequence than to deprive the remainder of life of all taste and relish. There may be women who have a taste for the fine arts, and who evince a decided talent for drawing or for music. In that case, there can be no objection to their cultivation ; but the error is, to make these things the grand and universal object, — to insist upon it that every woman is to sing, and draw, and dance — with nature or against nature, — to bind her apprentice to some accomplishment, and, if she cannot succeed in oil or water-colours, to prefer gilding, varnishing, burnishing, box-making, or shoe-making, to real and solid improvement in taste, knowledge, and understanding.

A great deal is said in favour of the social nature of the fine arts. Music gives pleasure to others. Drawing is an art, the amusement of

which does not centre in him who exercises it, but is diffused among the rest of the world. This is true ; but there is nothing, after all, so social as a cultivated mind. We do not mean to speak slightly of the fine arts, or to depreciate the good humour with which they are sometimes exhibited ; but we appeal to any man, whether a little spirited and sensible conversation—displaying, modestly, useful acquirements—and evincing rational curiosity, is not well worth the highest exertions of musical or graphical skill. A woman of accomplishments may entertain those who have the pleasure of knowing her for half an hour with great brilliancy ; but a mind full of ideas, and with that elastic spring which the love of knowledge only can convey, is a perpetual source of exhilaration and amusement to all that come within its reach ;—not collecting its force into single and insulated achievements, like the efforts made in the fine arts—but diffusing, equally over the whole of existence, a calm pleasure—better loved as it is longer felt—and suitable to every variety and every period of life. Therefore, instead of hanging the understanding of a woman upon walls, or hearing it vibrate upon strings,—instead of seeing it in clouds, or hearing it in the wind,—we would make it the first spring and ornament of society, by enriching it with attainments upon which alone such power depends.

If the education of women were improved, the education of men would be improved also. Let any one consider (in order to bring the matter more home by an individual instance) of what immense importance to society it is, whether a nobleman of first-rate fortune and distinction is well or ill brought up ;—what a taste and fashion he may inspire for private and for political vice ;—and what misery and mischief he may produce to the thousand human beings who are dependent on him ! A country contains no such curse within its bosom. Youth, wealth, high rank, and vice, form a combination which baffles all remonstrance and invective, and beats down all opposition before it. A man of high rank who combines these qualifications for corruption, is almost the master of the manners of the age, and has the public happiness within his grasp. But the most beautiful possession which a country can have is a noble and a rich man, who loves virtue and knowledge ;—who, without being feeble or fanatical, is pious—and who, without being factious, is firm and independent ;—who, in his political life, is an equitable mediator between king and people ; and, in his civil life, a firm promoter of all which can shed a lustre upon his country, or promote the peace and order of the world. But if these objects are of the importance which we attribute to them, the education of women must be important, as the formation of character for the first seven or eight years of life seems to depend almost entirely upon them. It is certainly in the power of a sensible and well-educated mother to inspire, within that period, such tastes and propensities as shall nearly decide the destiny of the future man ; and this is done, not only by the intentional exertions of the mother, but by the gradual and insensible imitation of the child ; for there is something extremely contagious in greatness and rectitude of thinking, even at that age ; and the character of the mother, with whom he passes his early infancy, is always an event of the utmost importance to the child. A merely accomplished woman cannot infuse her tastes into the minds of her sons ; and if she could, nothing could be more unfortunate than her success. Besides, when her accomplishments are given up, she has nothing left

for it, but to amuse herself in the best way she can ; and, becoming entirely frivolous, either declines the fatigue of attending to her children, or, attending to them, has neither talents nor knowledge to succeed : and, therefore, here is a plain and fair answer to those who ask so triumphantly, Why should a woman dedicate herself to this branch of knowledge ? or why should she be attached to such science ?—Because, by having gained information on these points, she may inspire her son with valuable tastes, which may abide by him through life, and carry him up to all the sublimities of knowledge ;—because she cannot lay the foundation of a great character, if she is absorbed in frivolous amusements, nor inspire her child with noble desires, when a long course of trifling has destroyed the little talents which were left by a bad education.

It is of great importance to a country, that there should be as many understandings as possible actively employed within it. Mankind are much happier for the discovery of barometers, thermometers, steam-engines, and all the innumerable inventions in the arts and sciences. We are every day and every hour reaping the benefit of such talent and ingenuity. The same observation is true of such works as those of Dryden, Pope, Milton, and Shakespeare. Mankind are much happier that such individuals have lived and written ;—they add every day to the stock of public enjoyment—and perpetually gladden and embellish life. Now, the number of those who exercise their understandings to any good purpose is exactly in proportion to those who exercise it at all ; but, as the matter stands at present, half the talent in the universe runs to waste, and is totally unprofitable. It would have been almost as well for the world, hitherto, that women, instead of possessing the capacities they do at present, should have been born wholly destitute of wit, genius, and every other attribute of mind of which men make so eminent an use : and the ideas of use and possession are so united together, that, because it has been the custom in almost all countries to give to women a different and a worse education than to men, the notion has obtained that they do not possess faculties which they do not cultivate. Just as, in breaking up a common, it is sometimes very difficult to make the poor believe it will carry corn, merely because they have been hitherto accustomed to see it produce nothing but weeds and grass—they very naturally mistake its present condition for its general nature. So completely have the talents of women been kept down, that there is scarcely a single work, either of reason or imagination, written by a woman, which is in general circulation, either in the English, French, or Italian literature ;—scarcely one that has crept even into the ranks of our minor poets.

If the possession of excellent talents is not a conclusive reason why they should be improved, it at least amounts to a very strong presumption ; and, if it can be shown that women may be trained to reason and imagine as well as men, the strongest reasons are certainly necessary to show us why we should not avail ourselves of such rich gifts of nature ; and we have a right to call for a clear statement of those perils which make it necessary that such talents should be totally extinguished, or, at most, very partially drawn out. The burthen of proof does not lie with those who say, Increase the quantity of talent in any country as much as possible—for such a proposition is in conformity with every man's feelings : but it lies with those who say, Take care to keep that understanding weak and trifling, which nature has made

capable of becoming strong and powerful. The paradox is with them, not with us. In all human reasoning, knowledge must be taken for a good, till it can be shown to be an evil. But now, Nature makes to us rich and magnificent presents; and we say to her — You are too luxuriant and munificent — we must keep you under, and prune you; — we have talents enough in the other half of the creation; — and, if you will not stupify and enfeeble the mind of women to our hands, we ourselves must expose them to a narcotic process, and educate away that fatal redundancy with which the world is afflicted, and the order of sublunary things deranged.

One of the greatest pleasures of life is conversation; — and the pleasures of conversation are of course enhanced by every increase of knowledge: not that we should meet together to talk of alkalis and angles, or to add to our stock of history and philology — though a little of all these things is no bad ingredient in conversation: but, let the subject be what it may, there is always a prodigious difference between the conversation of those who have been well educated and of those who have not enjoyed this advantage. Education gives fecundity of thought, copiousness of illustration, quickness, vigour, fancy, words, images, and illustrations; — it decorates every common thing, and gives the power of trifling, without being undignified and absurd. The subjects themselves may not be wanted, upon which the talents of an educated man have been exercised; but there is always a demand for those talents which his education has rendered strong and quick. Now, really nothing can be further from our intention than to say any thing rude and unpleasant; but we must be excused for observing, that it is not now a very common thing to be interested by the variety and extent of female knowledge; but it is a very common thing to lament, that the finest faculties in the world have been confined to trifles utterly unworthy of their richness and their strength.

The pursuit of knowledge is the most innocent and interesting occupation which can be given to the female sex; nor can there be a better method of checking a spirit of dissipation than by diffusing a taste for literature. The true way to attack vice is by setting up something else against it. Give to women, in early youth, something to acquire, of sufficient interest and importance to command the application of their mature faculties, and to excite their perseverance in future life; — teach them that happiness is to be derived from the acquisition of knowledge, as well as the gratification of vanity; and you will raise up a much more formidable barrier against dissipation than an host of invectives and exhortations can supply.

It sometimes happens that an unfortunate man gets drunk with very bad wine, — not to gratify his palate, but to forget his cares: he does not set any value on what he receives, but on account of what it excludes; — it keeps out something worse than itself. Now, though it were denied that the acquisition of serious knowledge is of itself important to a woman, still it prevents a taste for silly and pernicious works of imagination; it keeps away the horrid trash of novels; and, in lieu of that eagerness for emotion and adventure, which books of that sort inspire, promotes a calm and steady temperament of mind.

A man who deserves such a piece of good fortune may generally find an excellent companion for all the vicissitudes of his life; but it is not so easy to find a companion for his understanding, who has similar pursuits with himself, or who can comprehend the pleasure he derives

from them. We really can see no reason why it should not be otherwise; nor comprehend how the pleasures of domestic life can be promoted by diminishing the number of subjects in which persons who are to spend their lives together take a common interest.

One of the most agreeable consequences of knowledge is the respect and importance which it communicates to old age. Men rise in character often as they increase in years; — they are venerable from what they have acquired, and pleasing from what they can impart. If they outlive their faculties, the mere frame itself is respected for what it once contained; but women (such is their unfortunate style of education) hazard every thing upon one cast of the die; — when youth is gone, all is gone. No human creature gives his admiration for nothing: either the eye must be charmed, or the understanding gratified. A woman must talk wisely, or look well. Every human being must put up with the coldest civility, who has neither the charms of youth nor the wisdom of age. Neither is there the slightest commiseration for decayed accomplishments: — no man mourns over the fragments of a dancer, or drops a tear on the relics of musical skill. They are flowers destined to perish; but the decay of great talents is always the subject of solemn pity; and, even when their last memorial is over, their ruins and vestiges are regarded with pious affection.

There is no connexion between the ignorance in which women are kept, and the preservation of moral and religious principle; and yet certainly there is, in the minds of some timid and respectable persons, a vague, indefinite dread of knowledge, as if it were capable of producing these effects. It might almost be supposed, from the dread which the propagation of knowledge has excited, that there was some great secret which was to be kept in impenetrable obscurity, — that all moral rules were a species of delusion and imposture, the detection of which, by the improvement of the understanding, would be attended with the most fatal consequences to all, and particularly to women. If we could possibly understand what these great secrets were, we might perhaps be disposed to concur in their preservation; but, believing that all the salutary rules which are imposed on women are the result of true wisdom, and productive of the greatest happiness, we cannot understand how they are to become less sensible of this truth in proportion as their power of discovering truth in general is increased, and the habit of viewing questions with accuracy and comprehension established by education. There are men, indeed, who are always exclaiming against every species of power, because it is connected with danger: their dread of abuses is so much stronger than their admiration of uses, that they would cheerfully give up the use of fire, gunpowder, and printing, to be freed from robbers, incendiaries, and libels. It is true, that every increase of knowledge may possibly render depravity more depraved, as well as it may increase the strength of virtue. It is in itself only power; and its value depends on its application. But, trust to the natural love of good where there is no temptation to be bad — it operates nowhere more forcibly than in education. No man, whether he be tutor, guardian, or friend, ever contents himself with infusing the mere ability to acquire; but, giving the power, he gives with it a taste for the wise and rational exercise of that power; so that an educated person is not only one with stronger and better faculties than others, but with a more useful propensity — a disposition better cultivated — and associations of a higher and more important class.

In short, and to recapitulate the main points upon which we have insisted.—Why the disproportion in knowledge between the two sexes should be so great, when the inequality in natural talents is so small; or why the understanding of women should be lavished upon trifles, when nature has made it capable of higher and better things, we profess ourselves not able to understand. The affectation charged upon female knowledge is best cured by making that knowledge more general; and the economy devolved upon women is best secured by the ruin, disgrace, and inconvenience which proceeds from neglecting it. For the care of children, nature has made a direct and powerful provision; and the gentleness and elegance of women is the natural consequence of that desire to please, which is productive of the greatest part of civilization and refinement, and which rests upon a foundation too deep to be shaken by any such modifications in education as we have proposed. If you educate women to attend to dignified and important subjects, you are multiplying, beyond measure, the chances of human improvement, by preparing and *medicating* those early impressions which always come from the mother; and which, in a great majority of instances, are quite decisive of character and genius. Nor is it only in the business of education that women would influence the destiny of men:—If women knew more, men must learn more—for ignorance would then be shameful—and it would become the fashion to be instructed. The instruction of women improves the stock of national talents, and employs more minds for the instruction and amusement of the world;—it increases the pleasures of society by multiplying the topics upon which the two sexes take a common interest;—and makes marriage an intercourse of understanding as well as of affection, by giving dignity and importance to the female character. The education of women favours public morals; it provides for every season of life, as well as for the brightest and the best; and leaves a woman when she is stricken by the hand of time, not as she now is, destitute of every thing, and neglected by all, but with the full power and the splendid attractions of knowledge,—diffusing the elegant pleasures of polite literature, and receiving the just homage of learned and accomplished men.

ON THE EXPEDIENCY OF A LEGISLATIVE PROVISION FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE.*

SOME worthy persons, how deeply soever they may be impressed with the importance of universal Education, are disposed to question the expediency of Government interfering with the Instruction of the people, and that on two grounds:—They are suspicious of Government, and afraid of entrusting it with so powerful an engine of authority and influence; and they rely upon the general maxim of modern policy, which prescribes the rule of leaving the concerns of the people as much as possible to their own care. Now, we conceive that both these objections to a system of National Instruction, countenanced and supported by the State, are founded upon most fallacious grounds—and we shall take them in their order.

* The New Plan of Education for England.—Vol. xxxiv. page 220. August, 1820.

I. Admitting that a superintendence of the education of youth were likely to give the Government some increase of influence, it would by no means follow that this price was not a cheap one for the benefit purchased, unless it were shown that any other means existed of securing the same benefit; and this consideration belongs to the other head of the argument. An established religion and endowed church certainly arms the civil magistrate with no small power — a power wholly foreign to the purposes of supporting a hierarchy, and only arising incidentally out of the means necessary for accomplishing those purposes. The expediency of such an establishment has accordingly been denied by many, who had never witnessed, or not duly reflected upon the numberless evils of unlimited fanaticism, and the great risks of the people receiving no religious instruction, or at least such instruction as could hardly lead to any religious improvement, were they left entirely to the tuition of their own stipendiaries, at all seasons of private and of public fortune. But no man has ever denied the advantages, nay the necessity, of providing for the administration of justice; and yet it may safely be affirmed, that the Judicial establishment of a State, in the present liberal-minded age, furnishes as much of what Mr. Bentham terms the ‘*Matter of Influence*’ to its government, as the hierarchy itself: for we believe that Lawyers have, in most enlightened countries, succeeded to no little portion of the sway once enjoyed by their predecessors, the Priests. But there is another and a most important circumstance to be taken into consideration. Not only may checks be devised which shall control the interference of the Government, and confine its operation within certain limits; but the principal portion of the influence thus acquired is over the minds of children, whose ripened understandings will easily shake it off, if indeed time does not silently efface its impression; and above all, it is never to be forgotten, that the natural effect of the system is to increase, beyond all calculation, the power and energy of the people generally, and especially to furnish, in each individual instance, the very antidote most adapted to counteract any tendency which the mode of tuition might have, unfriendly to perfect independence. All considerations of patronage being put out of view for the present, because means may be devised of removing any such dangers, it seems obvious, on the one hand, that no very great harm can result from the Government, or the establishments connected with it, generally superintending the manner in which the first rudiments of learning shall be conveyed to children; and, on the other, that the progress of popular improvement will, by the great and certain supply of instruction thus obtained, be so accelerated as indirectly to counteract a far greater weight than can ever be gained by Government through the direct operation of such a cause. Let the people but read and write and cipher, and they must think for themselves: and it would, in our humble opinion, be quite as unreasonable to complain of the power which the superintendence of their education may give to their rulers, as to be alarmed at the chance of their knowledge leading them into habits of insubordination. Such fears on the part of the Governors have now happily been removed. It will argue very little for the good sense of the governed, if any considerable portion of them fall a victim to the opposite alarm, and still less for their candour, if they make an outcry of this description without really feeling the alarm.

2. The other objection to Government interfering rests upon a plain

misconception or perversion of the principle which it professes to proceed from. Nor are similar errors at all uncommon among shallow and half-read economists, in dealing with that principle. It is indeed one of the evils which have flowed from its great simplicity and easy application. Before the time when the science of political economy was purified and simplified by the labours of the French theorists and of our countrymen Hume and Smith, a considerable stock of learning, and a great familiarity with details, was required to set up as a political speculator. When the change took place, which was found mainly to consist in rejecting the officious interference of the Government with men's private concerns as useless, or repudiating it as pernicious, every sciolist who had turned over a few pages of the great works where this principle is unfolded with infinite practical knowledge and much nice limitation and qualification, thought he was at once master of the whole science, and could settle all questions belonging to it, by merely saying, if a Frenchman, '*Laissez-faire*' — and if an Englishman, '*Leave things to themselves.*' How many persons have we heard thus disposing of all nice matters of national polity by crying out, '*Adam Smith,*' — and adding, '*things will find their level*' — persons who had no knowledge of things, and hardly knew what level meant!

But the same error has pervaded men considerably above this description of shallow talkers. The first province and proper office of the doctrine in question has not been sufficiently regarded; still less has it been observed with what material guards and modifications its original patrons always promulgated it. This principle originally was never meant to extend further than to the laws by which capital is distributed and accumulated. Its import was, that every man being the best judge of his own interest, and that interest being necessarily the same with the interest of the community, as far as the augmentation of national wealth is concerned, the State ought to leave the employment of his industry, skill, and capital, as much as possible to himself, both because he has a right to chuse for himself in this respect, and because he will in general make a far better choice for himself, that is, also for the state, than the state can make for him. But neither Adam Smith, nor any one else whose authority is worth mentioning, ever dreamt of prescribing the same neutrality and abstinence to the Government upon all matters of public concernment. On the contrary, they all admitted very ample heads of exception, even to the application of the rule as far as regards capital itself. Smith, as is well known, went so far as to approve of the Usury laws, although Bentham has since most satisfactorily erased this chapter from the catalogue of excepted cases; but the Navigation Law of England, and indeed of Holland, has never been allowed to be absolutely founded on false principles, although it be by far the widest deviation from the general rule ever made, and in a matter of the greatest importance. The excuse given for it by Dr. Smith seems still to be admitted, that there are other things which deserve our care beside the increase of wealth, and that defence is more important than riches. This seems to satisfy men's minds that the Navigation Law was beneficial at the time, although unquestionably we have adhered to it long after it had ceased to do any thing but mischief in every way.

But who ever dreamt of carrying the principle so far as the persons do with whom we are at present contending? They might as well

talk of leaving the settlement of disputes between individuals to the private settlement, the *domestic forum*, of arbitration. They might contend that the demand for justice, like every thing else, would produce a sufficient supply of the article; that all the useless machinery of civil courts might thus be dispensed with, its attendant patronage taken from the government, and its heavy expense saved to the people; and that the only necessary interference here would be by compulsory process to compel appearance and execution. Then, why the crowds of lawyers that blacken the gates of Themis's temples? Why degrees in the Civil, and Canon, and Common law? Why not let every man conduct causes before the arbitrators — as there is no fear of suitors employing bad counsel, any more than unskilful and unjust referees.

An hundred such instances might be added: but upon this matter of education let Adam Smith be heard for himself. In his Fifth Book, he expressly devotes one Part of the three into which the Chapter upon the Expenses of the State is divided, to the subject of Public Works and Institutions; the other two discuss the defence of the nation and administration of justice; and of the third Part, one article, and a very leading one, is, '*Of the Expense of Institutions for the Education of Youth.*' In handling this subject, he displays great learning, and his accustomed sound sense. He shows very clearly how the work of education has often been marred by the mismanagement of the Government, and how many branches of learning might be better taught by private encouragement. But this remark is only applicable to those accomplishments for which the wealthy furnish the chief demand. He never for a moment supposes that the poor could be expected either to seek or to find the means of instruction in the mere elements of knowledge, without any aid from the State. Nay, he goes farther, and proposes that a national education should not only be provided by the State, but that means should be taken for compelling the people to take advantage of it. 'For a very small expense, (says he,) the public can facilitate — can encourage — and can even *impose upon almost the whole body of the people* the necessity of acquiring those most essential parts of education,' (namely reading, writing, and accounts.)—*Wealth of Nations, Book V. Chap. I. Part 3. Art. 2.* He then recommends the means which he thinks best adapted to these ends; the establishment of parochial schools, with part of the expenses paid by the public, and part by the scholars; and the exclusion of such as cannot read and write and cipher from corporate rights, and '*the freedom of setting up any trade either in a village or town corporate.*' We question, after this, if the authority of Adam Smith will be with much confidence appealed to a second time upon the present occasion.

But it will be said, that authority ought not to usurp the place of reason; and the opinion of Smith may be combated, by his more rigid followers affirming that they preserve the faith in more absolute purity, nay, that they correct the backslidings of the master, and are destined to be the Bentham's of this chapter, for the purpose of making him throughout consistent with himself. We fear this is not precisely the destiny to which they are called; for reason seems to put them down quite as triumphantly as authority. The principle of non interference — of leaving things to themselves — applies not to the case of education, unless where the thing to be taught can be learnt in private, or by a very small number of pupils; that is to say, unless the question regards only the education of the rich. The moment a numerous

school is required, the principle fails; and fails more or less completely in proportion as the district is less or more populous. No man thinks that every farmer or tradesman, still less every poor labourer or mechanic, can have a private tutor for his children. To be taught at all, they must go to a school, where so many children attend, that each can be taken at a low rate of school wages, fees, or quarter-pence. In populous places, it may not be difficult to find masters who will make a trade in opening such schools for profit; but in villages or country districts, where the whole neighbourhood afford no more than twenty or thirty children, how is such a thing to be expected? Sixpence a week is a high price for such a school; it is more than the original price of the High School of Edinburgh, where the persons of the highest rank in Scotland educate their children in Latin, Greek, and Geography. Yet that high rate of quarter-pence would not maintain a master of a decent description in such a situation as we are supposing. It would take twice as much. Yet thirty children of the years for going to school, exclusive of nine or ten whose parents may prefer educating them at home, and especially girls, answers to a population of above four hundred inhabitants;—and it is needless to say how many districts there are in England and Wales where not above four hundred persons live. If, however, we suppose a moderate rate of quarter-pence only to be paid, then the lowest number of inhabitants who could afford to maintain a school must be above 800; and this is about the average population of the parishes all England over, including cities and towns, as well as country districts and villages. Supposing, again, that we separate the parishes into two classes, those of cities or great towns, and country ones; we can reckon the average of the latter at little more than 600—which is evidently far too thin a population to maintain a school, by trusting to the voluntary supply following the demand.

This seems to settle the matter as to country districts; but even in the towns, where the poor might more easily supply themselves with education, a difficulty occurs well deserving of attention. The supply of articles of prime necessity, in every country, may safely be left to be regulated by the demand; and there is no risk of any class of persons being long in want of them who can afford to pay a fair price for the acquisition; because all pretty nearly stand equally in need of them. But it is far otherwise with education. The poor are apt to undervalue it, or at least to postpone it to more sensible objects; and if there are many, or even several, persons in any district who seek it not, their negligence puts it out of the reach of those who desire it, because it reduces the number of scholars below that which can maintain a master. It would, indeed, be a fair position to lay down, that the whole of the poor, in any country, care considerably less for instruction than they ought; and that their wish for it is never strong and steady enough to command a regular and secure supply. Bad times come, and the quarter-pence are grudged; the school is broke up. The distress passes away, and the poor next year are anxious for instruction: but a long time must now elapse before another school will be ventured upon in that quarter where it had so lately failed. From a consideration of this circumstance, it seems reasonable to conclude that they are right who maintain the principle of bringing education to the door as it were of the poor man, both in towns and country districts, by extraordinary encouragements to the establishment of

schools, which requires a certain zeal and a certain combination to effect it, and may therefore most strictly be placed on the same footing with the erection of public works.

The evidence contained in the Digest signally confirms this view of the subject in every particular. It may be seen, no doubt, that the average number of children attending the unendowed Day schools (exclusive of Dame schools) is only thirty-one; but then the Tables also show that a considerable proportion of these are educated by charitable contributions. Indeed, of the 478,000 children educated at unendowed Day schools, 168,000 are maintained by subscription or other charity. Almost the whole of the Sunday schools, too, are free schools; and of the 165,000 educated at endowed schools, only about 20,000 pay quarter-pence. It thus appears, that nearly all the Sunday schools, and one half of the Day schools, in England are supported by charity.

But another ground is taken upon this point by the objectors. Seeing the impossibility of trusting to the poor themselves, they tell us, nevertheless, that we may trust to private beneficence. But this is a most fallacious argument, and is liable to be refuted by the very considerations to which its supporters appeal. The exertions which charitable persons have made in England for promoting Education, as well as for all other benevolent purposes, are far above our praise. Nevertheless, such efforts must have their limits; and we suspect those limits have of late years been reached. The fact that the British and Foreign School Society never has, at any time, had an income of 1,500*l.* a-year, even on paper, speaks volumes on this head. It is equally true, that the more individuals have exerted themselves in such efforts, the more likely they are now to be exhausted; and it is a known truth, that the difficulty of obtaining subscriptions for new charities has of late become almost insurmountable. Besides, such resources are fluctuating and uncertain in their nature; and nothing can be more obvious than that such a variable supply is ill adapted to meet a demand which either is or ought to be made constant and regular. The charitable labours of good and enlightened men, for educating the poor, are necessarily confined to populous places. There only can great meetings be held, and large contributions obtained. Accordingly, we find that the two great Societies for promoting Education, the National, and the British and Foreign School Society, only plant schools upon the new plan; and this plan, from its nature, must be confined to towns of considerable size. We are aware that mere private munificence has furnished many supplies to the same good cause; but that is a still more uncertain supply. Alms may be asked; and therefore there is far better ground for trusting to individual charity for supporting the poor. But how long would it take before individuals should bethink them of planting schools for the thousands of poor children who have now no means of instruction? Let it be recollected, too, that private charity is not always very judiciously bestowed. A desire to do too much for a few children is far more prevalent among the humane than a wise disposition to do somewhat for a greater number; and the truth is undeniable, that many well-intentioned men have founded establishments of a kind really hurtful to society, at a great cost, when a tenth of the funds would, if well applied, have proved really beneficial.

But we are desired to look at the result; and the vast progress made of late years in educating the poor is cited as a convincing proof how much may be expected from this source. We join willingly in this

appeal to facts; for we know that it must at once decide the whole question. From the Digest it appears, that there are about 145,000 children taught at the new Day schools, exclusive of those taught at Sunday schools,—which ought in this question to be kept apart, both because almost all of them attend Day schools also, and because the tuition at Sunday schools, without any other, is extremely imperfect. Now, from the numbers taught at these New schools, no one can doubt that a large deduction must be made for those educated before their establishment either at the same school previous to its being new modelled, or at some neighbouring seminary, given up since the larger one was set on foot. Perhaps 100,000 is not too small a number for the whole addition made in the means of Education by those new schools during the last fifteen years; and at this rate, nearly forty years would be required to afford the means still wanting, even if we supposed private charity to make the same exertions during the next half century that it has during the last few years; whereas no man can pretend to expect such a thing; and, indeed, every one knows that those exertions are almost wholly confined to large towns.

But the Digest likewise shows how many institutions of this description are languishing for want of funds, and how many unendowed schools of all kinds have been discontinued everywhere from the same cause. The necessity of some less precarious supply being provided of an article of such primary necessity as elementary education is, indeed, proved in almost every page of these volumes.

The result of the Tables may now be shortly referred to, as establishing beyond all controversy the want of education which now exists. The Endowed Schools in England teach about 165,000 children; the Unendowed Day schools 478,000. But this includes 53,000 taught at the Dame schools, where infants are generally sent before they are of an age to go to school, or learn almost any thing. It includes also the lace and straw schools of the midland counties, where we much fear little that is useful is in general learnt. If, then, we deduct for these schools, we shall have about 590,000 children taught at Day schools; and we must add about 10,000 for deficient returns, several parishes having made none. To this number of 600,000 are to be added the children belonging to persons in the upper and middle classes of society who educate their children, particularly daughters, at home or at boarding schools, not noticed in the Tables, though frequently in the Digest. Mr. Brougham, from the population returns, considered 50,000 as a proper allowance for this class, but, if any thing, too small; and the next addition made was incontestably much too large, except that he was desirous of rather understating than overstating the deficiency. He allowed, of the 452,000 taught at Sunday schools, 100,000 as attending those institutions beyond the numbers included in the column of Day schools; the known fact being, that a greater proportion than seven-ninths of the Sunday scholars attend Week-day schools. The grand total of children educated in any way, even in the scanty measure dealt out by Sunday schools, is thus only 750,000. Now, the lowest estimate of the means of education for any country requires that there should be schools for one-tenth of the population; but from the Digest it clearly appears that a larger proportion is requisite, especially if we include the means for all classes, high as well as low. Mr. Brougham reckons rather more than one ninth; but, taking one tenth as the scale, it thus appears that there are only the means of educating seven mil-

lions and a half of the people in England, leaving no less than two millions without any education, and three millions without the only effectual education, namely, that obtained at Day schools. Let us shortly compare this with the state of other countries where popular education is supposed to be well attended to.

In Scotland, taking the average of twelve counties, the population of which is 636,000, and making *no* allowance for the education of the upper classes, or for private tuition, at all, there are schools where between one-ninth and one tenth of the population are taught. In Holland, by the Report of the Commission of 1812, at the head of which was Mr. Cuvier, it appears that there were 4,451 schools, where 190,000 children were instructed, or one-tenth of the population. In the Pays de Vaud, about one-eighth of the people attend the parish schools; and not one person in sixty is to be found who can't read. France presents a very different picture. The Report of the Commission in 1819 gave the numbers attending schools at 1,070,500, or 1-28th of the population. Yet the exertions making in that country may well excite our admiration. In two years, the numbers had increased from 866,000; the proportion in 1817 having been only 1-35th. During those well spent, and, let us say, truly glorious years of civil triumph, 7,120 schools had been planted, capable of educating 204,500 children, and supplying the means of education to a population of two millions. The zeal of individuals being powerfully seconded by the Government, in a very few years France will be as well educated as Holland. Wales appears to be much worse off than England; there are not schools, even including Dame schools, for above one-twentieth — that is, there are only the means of educating half the people of the principality.

The inequality with which the education of which we have been speaking is diffused through the different parts of England is a very striking circumstance, and affords perhaps the strongest of all arguments against leaving matters to themselves, or relying entirely upon the charitable exertions of individuals. In the four northern counties of Westmoreland, Cumberland, Northumberland, and Durham, the average is about one-tenth; in Westmoreland it is as high as one-seventh or one-eighth — being superior to the Pays de Vaud, and consequently the best educated district in Europe. In Wilts and Somersetshire, the average is one-eighteenth, or one-nineteenth; in Lancaster and Middlesex one-twentyfourth. But before the establishment of the new schools in Middlesex, it was as low as one-fortysixth. This fact, respecting such a county, is truly deplorable. Calculating, as we before did, for the whole country, it thus appears, that at the present moment there are not the means of education for one half the people in the metropolitan county; and that, but a few years ago, there were three-fourths of that population destitute of those means.*

* The articles in the E. Review on the Education Committee of the House of Commons, and on Mr. Brougham's System of National Instruction, contain a mass of curious information on the momentous subject of Charity Abuses. See Vol. xxx. page 486. Vol. xxxi. page 497. Vol. xxxii. page 89. Vol. xxxiv. page 215. Vol. xxxv. page 214.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND NOT EXPOSED TO DANGER BY EDUCATING THE POOR IN SCHOOLS OPEN TO ALL SECTS.*

It surely speaks a strange language on the part of the Church of England, that her existence should be held up as inconsistent with two of the grandest objects to which the eyes of mankind can be directed — religious liberty and general education.

They who exert themselves to place her in this suspicious attitude, do no doubt deny that she is hostile to either:— And when was the time that persons in a dubious cause did not bestow a good name upon their own proceedings? But can they, who strain every nerve to hold a large portion of their fellow-citizens under unequal laws — that is, to a certain degree, to *outlaw* them, on account of religious opinions, be justly designated by any other name than *intolerant*? And can they, who rise up against the most efficient system for the instruction of the body of the people that ever was promulgated; who first endeavour to prevent entirely any such instruction; and, after that is found impracticable, exert themselves to supplant a more efficient by a less efficient system; in other words to prevent, if not all education, at least a great degree of it, be considered in any other light than that of its enemies?

We know very well, that many of the persons who oppose themselves to the best scheme of education are men of pure, and even of philanthropic intentions. It is also perfectly true, that the steps which have been taken in the name of the Church might at one time have been regarded as a national advantage; and that they are bad now only in so far as they tend to deprive the nation of a still greater good. But, in a matter like this, a difference in degree is every thing; and we entreat our readers to consider, but for a moment, the striking effects produced by a slight shade of superiority in the moral and intellectual training of a whole nation.

It is not necessary that they should compare a Turkish and a British population. Let them only reflect upon the state of the *Irish*, as compared with the *English* population,—both living under the same constitution,—both governed by the same laws, yet differing to so prodigious an extent in what they respectively contribute to the common good. Let them consider the population of *Scotland*, between whom and the English, though the difference is far less wide, the comparison is, perhaps, still more instructive. We desire our opponents to tell us, in what respect the circumstances of the English population have not been more favourable than those of the Scottish, except in the article of schooling alone? For we do not suppose it will be asserted, in the quarter to which we are addressing ourselves, that the *religious instruction* of the Scots has been better than that of the English, or its Church-establishment of a better description. Scotland was the poorest country. The lower orders in Scotland were a less regarded race. They had fewer political privileges; and the long continuance of the feudal system had left there a more marked and degrading distinction between the productive classes and those immediately above them than there is

* Pamphlets on the Madras and Lancasterian Systems of Education.— Vol. xxi. page 207. February, 1813.

any conception of in England. All these causes of elevation to the minds of the English populace were highly favourable both to their intellectual and moral virtues; and yet their inferiority to the Scots in both has ceased to be a matter of dispute. On the subject of its consequences,—on the importance of such a difference, two facts speak a language which cannot be disregarded. *1st*, There is no poor-rate in Scotland. In England, every eighth or ninth man is a pauper; and the poor's rate, which was a little under five millions ten years ago, is probably as much more than six at present. *2d*, According to the criminal calendars of the two countries, for every single criminal in Scotland, in an equal quantity of the population, you have eleven in England. The account then stands thus.

Violations of the law *eleven times* less frequent in Scotland than in England. In Scotland, the earnings of the labouring classes are adequate to their maintenance; in England, *not adequate*, by a prodigious and a growing deficiency. These are facts, one would imagine, that might make an impression even on those who care but little for the enjoyments of others, and who receive no pleasing emotion from the thought of conferring a new degree of mental health and vigour upon the most numerous class of their fellow creatures; while those, on the other hand, who are capable of feeling the value of that inward happiness which results from a mind lifted somewhat above the objects of mere animal pursuit,—qualified in some degree for the task of reflection,—and open to the innumerable delights which it brings, can require no extraneous motives to ensure their zealous concurrence in any scheme which is likely to confer such unspeakable advantages on so large a class of society. The reader will now be pleased to consider, what is the present state of the fact and the argument as to this most momentous question.

A system of schooling had been organized for the poor, by which the progress of the pupils was accelerated, and the expense of the tuition reduced, to a degree which far exceeded all previous experience. The attention of the nation, too, was at length effectually excited. Schools, in which the children of *all* the poor were received, without distinction of sect or denomination, arose in various quarters. The progress of the work kept pace with the hopes even of the most sanguine of the friends of humanity; and it wanted only a certain combination of philanthropic men to have diffused the blessings of instruction in a very short space of time through the whole mass of the population.

While this important business was proceeding in this happy train, another set of men presented themselves, who said, We will oppose and endeavour to put down these schools. And why? Because they are open to the children of *all* the poor, and none are excluded on account of religious distinctions. What we want is a set of schools in which religious distinctions shall form a principle of exclusion. We will establish schools, into which none shall gain admittance but children of Church-of-England men. The rest, a large proportion, may go without education, or get it where they please.

To most unprejudiced persons, the bare statement of those unquestionable facts must be sufficient: but we must hear attentively and impartially what can be said in favour of this latter plan. Nothing should be condemned rashly: and the more absurd and indefensible any thing

appears, which is seriously urged as a ground for pernicious conduct, the more indispensable it is to avoid every appearance of a passionate, partial, or precipitate decision.

With regard to the strange contrast which is exhibited between the two systems, — to the appearance, at least, of a most illiberal bigotry and narrowmindedness on the one hand, and of a pure, comprehensive, and noble philanthropy on the other — the patrons of the exclusive plan observe a wonderful silence. A curious change appears to have taken place in the disposition of the two parties. Till lately, the Church always prided herself in having sobriety at least, and cool reason, on her side; and was eager to hold up to contempt the jealous, unaccommodating, and illiberal views of the Sectarians. In the present instance, however, the two parties appear to have changed sides in every thing relating to bigotted zeal and calm ratiocination; — the spirit of separatism, and the spirit of conciliation.

It is almost equally remarkable, that they who hold themselves out as champions of the Church of England have scarcely ventured to say one word upon the great advantages which are afforded by the liberal scheme for accelerating the communication of knowledge; and the lamentable extent of the obstructions opposed to it by the narrow and restrictive scheme: they have, in a manner, declined this whole branch of the argument — though of itself quite decisive, as we apprehend, of the whole cause. For we think it may be made out in the most satisfactory manner, not only that the system of exclusion will substitute a very slow to a very rapid diffusion of the blessings of education, but that it will ultimately arrest the great work altogether — that it will not merely make the machine move heavily, but after a little time will stop its motion entirely.

The restrictive system makes *two* schools, at the very least, necessary, (one for churchmen, and one for those who are not churchmen,) — where, on the comprehensive plan, *one* would suffice. Now, it should always be remembered, that the sole difficulty of extending education universally is the expense. But the exclusive plan, from this simple circumstance, is obviously an infallible contrivance for doubling the expense. *Divide et impera* is an old device of politicians for the management of enemies; and we will confess we do not comprehend how it can ever be acted upon for purposes of friendship. Funds, which might have an irresistible efficacy when united and skillfully applied, may be altogether unserviceable when divided, and one part of them employed in opposing the other. If the conquests of education are to be rendered coextensive with the population, through private resources alone, the *only* chance of success depends upon the extreme economy with which they are applied. A scheme for doubling the expense, and rendering it less efficacious, is, in other words, a scheme for strangling the measure in the birth. If, on the other hand, we are to look to support from the public, the objection to the exclusive plan seems still more formidable. We do not think that any ministry which could at present be formed is likely to possess so very little of the liberal spirit of the times in which we live as to be favourable to a scheme which would burthen the nation at large for a system of education adapted to churchmen only. We are sure, at any rate, that any such scheme would excite so much contempt and indignation, both in Parliament and out of it, that no ministry would

ever venture to propose it : and, without paying any extravagant compliment either to the virtue or illumination of Parliament, we may predict, that any attempt to tax the nation — churchmen, and not churchmen — for the education of churchmen alone, would be treated as altogether oppressive and intolerable.

We are not perfectly sure that we ought to be sorry at the obstacles which oppose the transfer of education into public hands. It is not agreeable to experience, that what is managed by public functionaries is the best managed part of a nation's concerns. It is now a maxim of politics, which philosophy has extracted from experience, that wherever private interests are competent to the provision and application of their own instruments and means, such provision and application ought to be left to themselves. It was the opinion of Adam Smith, that all institutions for the education of those classes of the people who are able to pay for it, should be taken altogether out of the hands of public bodies, and left to the natural operation of that free competition which the interest of the parties desiring to teach and to be taught would naturally create ; — and it is easy to see, that the same reasoning is applicable, in a great degree, even to the education of the poorest classes. But when it unfortunately happens, that the mass of a people are exceedingly ignorant, and at the same time too poor to pay for instruction, it is obvious that something must be done to give the work a beginning. And with regard to the danger of training the people generally to habits of servility and toleration of arbitrary power, if their education be entrusted to Government, or persons patronized by the Government, — we can only say, that though we are far from considering the danger either as slight or chimerical, it is still so very great a good to have the faculty of reading and writing diffused through the whole body of the people, that we should be willing to run considerable risks for its acquirement, or even greatly to accelerate that acquirement. There is something in the possession of these keys of knowledge and of thought so truly admirable, that, when joined to another inestimable blessing, it is scarcely possible for any government to convert them into instruments of evil. That security is — the Liberty of the Press. Let the people only be taught to read, though by instruments ever so little friendly to their general interests, and the very intelligence of the age will provide them with books which will prove an antidote to the poison of their pedagogues. Bonaparte, indeed, or any other despot, may render the unhappy impressions which he makes during education indelible, because he can prevent the circulation of the books by which they might be counteracted. But grant, in any quarter of the globe, a reading people and a free press, — and the prejudices on which misrule supports itself will gradually and silently disappear. The impressions, indeed, which it is possible to make at the early age at which reading and writing are taught, and during the very short time that the teaching lasts, are so very slight and transitory, that they must be easily effaced wherever there is any thing to counteract them. In the tendency, for example, to free and manly thought which at this moment prevails in Great Britain, we do not believe, that, if every child in the kingdom were taught to read and write by a Tory clergyman of the Church of England, there would, on that account, be found in it one Whig or one Dissenter the less ; — perhaps there would even be more.

We are therefore, though with some hesitation, disposed to desire, in the present circumstances of England, assistance toward this grand work from the State, as far at least as to the erection of school-houses, and to the appointment of such small salaries as should be sufficient, and no more than sufficient, to secure the residence of a teacher, who should be chosen by the heads of families within the district, and paid in the main by his scholars. But, so long as the more powerful of the parties call out for schools upon the exclusive principle, no such plan can be realized. The exclusive principle is therefore, in every light in which the subject can be regarded, unfriendly to the general interests of education : and it is a mere deception to say, that, exclusive as it is, it is better than no system of education at all. At another time this might have been true ; and had the promoters of this limited and jealous measure of instruction tendered it to the benighted people when no other education was likely to be placed within their reach, we should have thought them entitled to the utmost gratitude. At present, however, the case is notoriously otherwise ; and we do not think we are going at all too far, when we say, that had the exclusive principle never been heard of, — had every man who has moved a step in its service remained dead to all concern about education, every child who has received or who shall receive tuition under its auspices would have been educated without it. The whole operation of the exclusive principle, therefore, has been in counteraction ; and all its effects upon education have been to retard and prevent it.

Infinitely, however, as we prize education, we still allow it to be conceivable that there may be objects to which it should be sacrificed. The Exclusionists say, they have found such an object. They say, it must be sacrificed to *Religion*. They do not, however, maintain exactly that the comprehensive system of education is incompatible with religion in general ; and, though willing enough to take the benefit of such a sentiment, they will not, when brought to strict terms of debate, venture openly to deny that the Dissenters have *religion*. All Christian sects are now shamed out of the atrocious assumption of the *monopoly* of Divine favour. The spirit of the age, humanized by philosophy, will hardly permit the most bigotted among them openly to deny even those of the most opposite tenets all title to acceptance with their Maker, or to the joys which are promised by religion. Each pretends only to some advantages, and nothing more, in its modes of securing the Divine favour ; and no one, hardly even the Roman Catholic, dares pronounce itself *assured* that its own mode is the best.

The whole scope of the objection then is, that the comprehensive plan of education, which has been shown to be the only plan by which such a population as that of England can ever be generally instructed, is opposed, not to the interests of religion, but to the interest of the Church of England. And here two questions naturally present themselves, — *first*, whether the Church is really exposed to any danger by this plan of education ; *secondly*, whether her protection from such a danger is a sufficient consolation or equivalent for the mischief which, under the shadow of her name, is sought to be done to education.

Whether the Church is exposed to any danger by educating the children of the labouring classes in seminaries open to all, has been treated so fully by the Tract entitled ‘ Schools for All,’ that little remains for us, except to refer to it. It is very true, that in the Lancas-

terian schools *, no attempt whatsoever is made to give any bias in favour of any particular religious system ; and it is undeniable, that means may be adopted to *secure* the most perfect impartiality. It is therefore the most irresistible of all conclusions, that if, under this plan, the Church of England is really exposed to any danger, it must be, because she cannot stand upon even ground with other institutions, and cannot exist under equality of treatment. Nor can it be at all doubtful, that those who anticipate her downfall from schools founded upon the principle of equality are, in the bottom of their hearts, convinced that this is her unfortunate condition. We, however, do not think so ill of her cause : and therefore it is that we feel persuaded, both that her interests have been mistaken, and her spirit misrepresented, by those noisy and ungracious advocates who have so officiously interposed with their aid against a danger to which her genuine friends and admirers never can suppose that she is exposed.

In confirmation of this view, it is peculiarly deserving of remark, that while so great, or at least so active, a portion of the members of the Church are in England exerting themselves, with so new and ominous an activity, in opposition to general education — in Ireland, *the very same church* should be acting upon the very opposite principle. In Ireland, it is laid down by the ‘ Board of Education ’ as the foundation of all their proceedings, that the resort of all to the same seminaries should, as far as possible, be encouraged and secured. In the Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners of that Board, which has just been printed by order of the House of Commons, the very second paragraph says, ‘ We have applied our efforts to the framing of a system which, ‘ whilst it shall afford the opportunities of education to every description of the lower classes of the people, may, at the same time, by ‘ keeping clear of all interference with the particular religious tenets ‘ of any, induce the whole to receive its benefits *as one undivided body, ‘ under one and the same system, and in the same establishments.*’

Surely it will not be pretended, that in England, where the majority of the people belong to the Church, this Church is in a more tottering condition than in Ireland, where it is said that not more than one-twentieth part of the population belong to it. Surely a great patriotic proceeding, which is not suspected of producing the slightest danger to the Church in Ireland, cannot actually be incompatible with its existence in England.

It should always be remembered, too, that teaching the elements of literature, and teaching the elements of religion, are two different things ; that they really have no more connexion than any other two branches of education whatsoever ; and that upon the principle of the division of labour, there is an obvious advantage in teaching them asunder. Wherever there are diversities of religious persuasion, therefore, the utility of separating letters, which *can* be taught in common

* The friends of the Lancasterian System of Education are under lasting obligations to the writers in the Edinburgh Review for their bold and uncompromising advocacy of its principles, at a time when they were assailed with so much bitterness and intolerance by the champions of ignorance. During the well-known controversy between the partisans of Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster, several able and spirited defences of the Lancasterian plan were published in the Review. See Vol. ix. page 177. Vol. xi. page 61. Vol. xvii. page 58. Vol. xix. page 1. Vol. xxi. page 207.

to all, from religion, which can *not* be so taught, seems so extremely obvious, that it is difficult to comprehend, either how it should have been overlooked, or upon what principles it can be denied.

It is very remarkable that the selection of such religious readings as implied nothing offensive to any sect of Christians, which in the Lancasterian schools has been so violently reprobated as teaching what, by a strange abuse of the word has been called *abstract* Christianity, is the very expedient which is recommended by the Prelates, Clergymen, and other eminent characters, who compose the 'Board of Education' in Ireland. It is also remarkable, that the true and proper expedient for inculcating all that is peculiar and distinctive in the modes of religious belief is the very expedient which is approved of and proposed by the same distinguished members, lay and ecclesiastical, of the Church in Ireland. In the same Report of the Board of Education which we have already quoted, they say,

'In the selection of books for the new schools, we doubt not but it will be found practicable to introduce, not only a number of books in which moral principles will be inculcated in such a manner as is likely to make deep and lasting impressions on the youthful mind, but also ample extracts from the Sacred Scriptures themselves, an early acquaintance with which we deem of the utmost importance, and, indeed, indispensable in forming the mind to just notions of duty and sound principles of conduct.'

'It appears to us that a selection may be made in which the most important parts of Sacred history shall be included, together with all the precepts of morality, and all the instructive examples by which those precepts are illustrated and enforced, and which shall not be liable to any of the objections which have been made to the use of the Scriptures in the course of education.'—'The study of such a volume of extracts from the Sacred writings would, in our opinion, form the best preparation for that more particular religious instruction which it would be the duty, and, we doubt not, the inclination also, of the several *ministers of religion* to give, at proper times *and in other places*, to the children of their *respective* congregations.'

The Board of Education in Ireland, composed entirely of members of the Church of England, and mostly of clergymen, decide thus clearly and unambiguously for the separation of instruction in letters from instruction in religion; — declare that they should be carried on in *separate places*; — and that the *clergymen* of the respective congregations are the bounden and the fittest teachers of religion to the children of their flocks. On the ground, then, both of unanswerable reason, and the highest and most unexceptionable example, we may venture to conclude that the Church of England, if she is the best organ of religion, as her panegyrists say that they believe she is, has nothing to fear, but every thing to hope, from the most liberal plan of giving instruction to the poor.

If this first question, however, be well decided, there is really an end to the controversy; and it can scarcely be worth while to inquire into the comparative importance of a Church establishment and of general education, since it appears that those two things are not opposed, but united, in their interests. The impulse, however, in favour of education has now been decidedly given; and the work *must* go forward, in spite even of greater obstructions than those which we are now lending our feeble aid to remove. Mr. Edgeworth, in a letter annexed to the last

Report of the Board of Education, attests this fact very strongly as to Ireland, and concludes with these remarkable expressions : — ‘ I cannot quit this subject without observing that the poor are now uncommonly anxious to procure education for their children. As a proof of this, I may mention that, in a number of private letters which I have lately had an opportunity of seeing, from young men abroad in different parts of the world, I have found most urgent entreaties to their parents or their wives *to keep their children to school.*’

From observation and inquiry assiduously directed to that object, we can ourselves speak decidedly as to the rapid progress which the love of education is making among the lower orders in England. Even around London, in a circle of fifty miles radius, which is far from the most instructed and virtuous part of the kingdom, there is hardly a village that has not something of a school, and not many children of either sex who are not taught, more or less, reading and writing. We have met with families in which, for weeks together, not an article of sustenance but potatoes had been used ; yet for every child the hard-earned sum was provided to send them to school. From a quarter worthy of our confidence we are informed that the number of letters which pass through the post-office, and, by the circumstances of their direction and superscription, prove that they are between persons in the lower ranks of life, has increased in a remarkable proportion during the last twenty years. Sunday newspapers are another extraordinary proof of the progress of reading and the love of political information among the lower orders of the people, however objectionable some of these publications may be thought. We are inclined also to think, though of this we cannot speak so positively, that the Evangelical and Wesleyan Magazines are chiefly read by the lower orders ; and of these together it is affirmed that from fifty to sixty thousand copies are distributed every month. We certainly wish that this disposition to read were better directed ; though we are informed, by persons who have paid some attention to the subject, that, in point of rationality and really useful information, the publications in question have greatly improved within the last four years.

Waging no war with the Church of England, to which, as a religious institution, we are willing to ascribe all the virtues with which her highest dignitaries have adorned her, we have no hesitation in declaring, that the *political* services which she has been said to render to the State are so far from being worthy to be compared with the advantages of general education, that we should look upon the cessation of these services as an advantage of no small magnitude.

The ‘ alliance of Church and State,’ when rightly interpreted, seems to mean merely the alliance of the majority with the majority, in order to keep down the minority, — which does not appear either to be a very just or a very necessary measure. And, accordingly, the doctrine of this famous alliance, which was at one time crammed down our throats with so much vigour, and which some persons seem sufficiently disposed to revive at the present moment, has been so generally discredited of late years, that it may fairly be considered as abandoned by all the temperate and enlightened advocates of the Establishment. Dr. Paley, for example, has stated unequivocally, that to ‘ make of the Church an engine or even an ally of the State, serves only to debase the institution ;’ and that ‘ the single end we ought to propose, by an ecclesiastical establishment, is the preservation and communication of

‘religious knowledge.’ And to the same purpose Mr. Burke, in terms still more direct and decided.—‘An alliance,’ says he, ‘between Church and State, in a Christian commonwealth, is, in my opinion, an idle and a fanciful speculation. An alliance is between two things that are in their nature distinct and independent, such as between two sovereign states; but in a Christian commonwealth the Church and the State are one and the same thing.’ To us, indeed, it appears more like a burlesque upon Government than any thing else, to say that the only way to secure the excellence of any political institution is to connect it with a corporation of priests, dependent upon it by their interests, and consequently bound, as far as interest is concerned, to support it when it invades the rights of the people as well as when it protects them. We are extremely happy to find the clergy of the Church of England, with almost one accord, now renouncing and ashamed of this perilous doctrine, and declaring the sole and exclusive utility of their order to consist in the preservation of a pure faith and good works among the people. No good government can ever want more than two things for its support: *1st*, Its own excellence; and, *2dly*, A people sufficiently instructed to be aware of that excellence. Every other pretended support must ultimately tend to its subversion, by lessening its dependence upon these, and consequently lessening the inducement to promote good government and general instruction.

THE BEST MEANS OF PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE AMONGST THE WORKING CLASSES.*

THE subject of Popular Education has frequently engaged our attention since the commencement of this Journal; but we have hitherto confined ourselves to the great fundamental branch of the question, — the provisions for elementary instruction by schools in which the poor may be taught reading and writing, and thus furnished with the means of acquiring knowledge. We are desirous now of pursuing this inquiry into its other branch — the application of those means — the use of those instruments — the manner in which the working classes of the community may be most effectually and safely assisted in improving their minds by scientific acquirements.

But, *first*, we would guard against the supposition that we are assuming sufficient provision to have been made for elementary education, when we direct the reader’s attention to its higher departments. There is no reason whatever for postponing the consideration of the latter until the former shall be completed. On the contrary, the deficiency now existing in the proportion of schools to the population of the country would in all probability be much diminished if useful knowledge were diffused among all those who have already learnt to read. The greater use they make of this acquirement, the more widely will the desire of having it be spread; the better informed a large portion of the people becomes, the more difficult will it be for narrow-minded men to keep

* Reports of Mechanics’ Institutions.—Vol. xli. page 96. October, 1824.

any part of their countrymen in ignorance. Nay, the direct operation of knowledge will tend to eradicate ignorance. A father of a family, who can barely read, and has turned this talent to little account in improving his mind, may leave his children uneducated unless the means of instruction are afforded him by the State, or by some other charity; but one who has made some progress in science, or in acquiring general information, will rather sacrifice any personal comfort than suffer his children to be uneducated, and will take care that, in some way or other, they obtain that instruction to which his own improvement is owing. It is very far, therefore, from being true, that we should wait till schools are provided for all, and till all can read, before we consider how those who can read may best turn that faculty to account. A superficial view of the subject can alone make any one believe that the latter inquiry is premature if it precedes the universal establishment of elementary education. The planting of schools for the young, and assisting those more advanced in their studies, are works that may well go on together, and must aid each other.

The fundamental principle which chiefly merits attention in discussing this subject is, that the interference of the government may be not only safe, but advantageous and even necessary, in providing the means of elementary education for children; but that no such interference can be tolerated, to the smallest extent, with the subsequent instruction of the people. If a child be only taught to read and write, it is extremely immaterial by whom or on what terms he is put in possession of the instruments by which knowledge may be acquired. It would, no doubt, be a gross act of oppression if the government were to spend part of the money, raised from the people at large, in forming schools from which, by the regulations, certain classes of the community should be excluded. But if those schools are only so constructed that all may enter, no dangerous influence can result to the government, and no undue bias be communicated to the minds of the children, by having them taught the art of reading in seminaries connected with the establishment in Church and State. It is far otherwise with the use that may afterwards be made of the tools thus acquired. Once suffer the least interference with that, and the government has made a step towards absolute power, and may, with a little address and in a short time, if unresisted, reach its journey's end. Such a jealousy as we are here inculcating is the more essentially necessary in a country where the existence of an established church, with its appendages of universities and public schools, has already thrown religious instruction into the hands of a particular class, and given the government great influence over the education, generally, of the higher classes. In such a community, any interference with the diffusion of knowledge among the great body of the people would be pregnant with the most fatal consequences both to civil and religious liberty.

It is manifest that the people themselves must be the great agents in accomplishing the work of their own education. Unless they are thoroughly impressed with a sense of its usefulness, and resolved to make some sacrifices for the acquisition of it, there can be no reasonable prospect of this grand object being attained. But it is equally clear that to wait until the whole people, with one accord, take the determination to labour in this good work, would be endless. A portion of the community may be sensible of its advantages, and willing at any fair price to seek them, long before the same laudable feeling becomes universal;

and their successful efforts to better their intellectual condition cannot fail to spread more widely the love of knowledge and the contempt for vulgar and sensual gratifications.

But although the people must be the source and the instruments of their own improvement, they may be essentially aided in their efforts to instruct themselves. Difficulties which might be sufficient to damp or wholly to obstruct their progress may be removed; and efforts which, unassisted, would perhaps prove a transient or only a partial enthusiasm for the attainment of knowledge, may, with judicious encouragement, be made both a lasting and an universal habit. A little attention to the difficulties that principally beset the poor in their search after information will at once lead us to the knowledge of those wants in which their more affluent neighbours can lend them most valuable assistance.

Their difficulties may all be classed under one or other of two heads — want of money and want of time. To the first belongs the difficulty of obtaining those books and instructors which persons in easy circumstances can command; and to the second it is owing that the same books and instructors are not adapted to them which suffice to teach persons who have leisure to go through the whole course of any given branch of science. It is also owing to their habitual occupation that, in some lines of employment, there is hardly a possibility of finding any time for acquiring knowledge. This is particularly the case with those whose labour is severe, or, though less severe, yet in the open air; for here the tendency to sleep immediately after it ceases, and the greater portion of sleep required, oppose very serious obstacles to instruction.

The first method, then, that suggests itself for promoting knowledge among the poor, is the encouragement of cheap publications; and in no country is this more wanted than in Great Britain, where, with all our boasted expertness in manufactures, we have never succeeded in printing books at so little as double the price required by our neighbours on the Continent. A gown, which anywhere else would cost a guinea, may be made in this country for half a crown; but a volume, fully as well or better printed, and on paper which, if not as fine, is quite fine enough, and far more agreeable to the eyes, than could be bought in London for half a guinea, costs only six francs, or less than five shillings, at Paris. The high price of labour in a trade where so little can be done, or at least is done, by machinery, is one of the causes of this difference. But the direct tax upon paper is another; and the determination to print upon paper of a certain price is a third; and the aversion to crowd the page is a fourth. Now all of these, except the first, may be got over. The duty on paper is three-pence a pound, which must increase the price of an octavo volume eight-pence or nine-pence; and this upon paper of every kind, and printing of every kind; so that if by whatever means the price of a book were reduced to the lowest, say to three or four shillings, about a fourth or a fifth must be added for the tax; and this book, brought as low as possible to accommodate the poor man, with the coarsest paper and most ordinary type, must pay exactly as much to government as the finest hot-pressed work of the same size. This tax ought, therefore, by all means, to be given up; but though, from its being the same upon all paper used in printing, no part of it can be saved by using coarse paper, much of it may be saved by crowding the letter-

press, and having a very narrow margin. This experiment has been tried of late in London, upon a considerable scale; but it may easily be carried a great deal further. Thus, Hume's History has been begun; and one volume, containing about two and a half of the former editions, has been published. It is sold for six shillings and sixpence; but it contains a great number of cuts neatly executed; the paper is much better than is necessary, and the printing is perfectly well done. Were the cuts omitted, and the most ordinary paper and type used, the price might be reduced to 4s. or 4s. 6d.; and a book might thus be sold for 12s. or 14s., which now costs perhaps two or three pounds.

The method of publishing in numbers is admirably suited to the circumstances of the poor. Two-pence is easily saved in a week by almost any labourer; and by a mechanic sixpence in a week may without difficulty be laid by. Those who have not attended to these matters, ('the simple annals of the poor,') would be astonished to find how substantial a meal of information may be had by twopenny-worths. Seven numbers, for fourteen-pence, comprise Franklin's Life and Essays; and thirty for a crown, the whole of the Arabian Nights. But in looking over the list of those cheap publications, we certainly do not find many that are of a very instructive cast; and here it is that something may be done by way of encouragement. That the demand for books, cheap as well as dear, must tend to produce them, no one doubts; but then it is equally certain, that the publication of cheap books increases the number of readers among the poor; and we can hardly conceive a greater benefit being rendered to them than those would confer who should make a judicious selection from our best authors upon ethics, politics, and history, and promote cheap editions of them in numbers, without waiting until the demand was such as to make the sale a matter of perfect certainty. Lord John Russell, in his excellent and instructive speech upon Parliamentary Reform, delivered in 1822, stated, that 'an establishment was commenced a few years ago, by a number of individuals, with a capital of not less than a million, for the purpose of printing standard works at a cheap rate;' and he added, that it had been 'very much checked in its operation by one of those acts for the suppression of knowledge which were passed in the year 1819, although one of its rules was not to allow the venders of its works to sell any book on the political controversies of the day.' The only part of this plan which we can see the least objection to, is the restriction upon politics. Why should not political, as well as all other works, be published in a cheap form, and in numbers? That history, the nature of the constitution, the doctrines of political economy, may safely be disseminated in this shape, no man now-a-days will be hardy enough to deny. Some points connected with those subjects are matter of pretty warm contention in the present times, and yet these may be freely handled, it seems, with safety; indeed, unless they are so handled, the subjects they belong to cannot be discussed at all. Why then may not every topic of politics, party as well as general, be treated of in these cheap publications? It is highly useful to the community that the true principles of the constitution should be understood by every man who lives under it. The peace of the country, and the stability of the government, could not be more effectually secured than by the universal diffusion of this kind of knowledge. The abuses which through time have crept into the practice of it, and the errors committed in its ad-

ministration, may most fitly be expounded in the same manner. And if any man, or set of men, denies the existence of such abuses, and sees no error in the conduct of those who administer the government, he may propagate *his* doctrines through the like channels. Cheap works being furnished, the choice of them may be left to the readers. Assuredly, a country which tolerates every form, even the most violent, of daily and weekly discussion in the newspapers, can have nothing to dread from the diffusion of political doctrines somewhat less desultory, and in a form more likely to make them be both well weighed at the time, and preserved for repeated perusal. It cannot be denied, that the habit of cursory reading, engendered by finding all subjects discussed in publications which, how great soever their merits may be, no one ever thinks of looking at a second time, is unfavourable to the acquisition of solid and permanent information.

Although the providing cheap publications furnishes the most effectual means of bringing knowledge within the reach of a poor man's income, there are other modes deserving our attention, whereby a similar assistance may be rendered, and his resources economized. Circulating libraries may in some circumstances be of use; but, generally speaking, they are little adapted to those who have only an hour or two every day, or every other day, to bestow upon reading. Book clubs, or reading societies, are *far* more suited to the labouring classes, may be established by very small numbers of contributors, and require an inconsiderable fund. If the associates live near one another, arrangements may be easily made for circulating the books, so that they may be in use every moment that any one can spare from his work. Here, too, the rich have an easy method presented to them of promoting instruction; the gift of a few books, as a beginning, will generally prove a sufficient encouragement to carry on the plan by weekly or monthly contributions; and with the gift a scheme may be communicated, to assist the contributors in arranging the plan of their association.

It is, however, as we have remarked, not only necessary that the money of the poor, but their time also, should be economized; and this consideration leads to various suggestions.

In the *first* place, there are many occupations in which a number of persons work in the same room: and unless there be something noisy in the work, one may always read while the others are employed. If there are twenty-four men together, this arrangement would only require each man to work one extra day in four weeks, supposing the reading to go on the whole day, which it would not; but a boy or a girl might be engaged to perform the task, for a sum so trifling as not to be felt. This expedient, too, it may be observed, would save money as well as time; one copy of a book, and that borrowed for the purpose, or obtained from a reading society or circulating library, would suffice for a number of persons. We may add, that great help would be given by the better informed and more apt learners to such as are slower of apprehension and more ignorant; and discussion (under proper regulations) would be of singular use to all, even the most forward proficient; which leads us to observe,

Secondly, That societies for the express purpose of promoting conversation are a most useful adjunct to any private or other education received by the working classes. Those who do not work together in numbers, or whose occupation is of a noisy kind, may thus, one or two

evenings in the week, meet and obtain all the advantages of mutual instruction and discussion. An association of this kind will naturally combine with its plan the advantages of a book club. The members will most probably be such as are engaged in similar pursuits, and whose train of reading and thinking may be nearly the same. The only considerable evils which they will have to avoid are, being too numerous, and falling too much into debate. From twenty to thirty seems a convenient number; and nearer the former than the latter. The tone ought to be given from the beginning, in ridicule of speech-making, both as to length and wordiness. A subject of discussion may be given out at one meeting for the next; or the chairman may read a portion of some work, allowing each member to stop him at any moment, for the purpose of controverting, supporting, or illustrating by his remarks the passage just read. To societies of this kind master workmen have the power of affording great facilities. They may allow an hour on the days when the meetings are holden; or if that is too much, they may allow the men to begin an hour earlier on those days; or if even that cannot be managed, they may let them have an hour and a half, on condition of working half an hour extra on three other days. But a more essential help will be the giving them a place to meet. There are hardly twenty or thirty workmen in any branch of business, some of whose masters have not a room, workshop, warehouse, or other place sufficient to accommodate such a society; and it is perfectly necessary that the place of rendezvous should on no account be the alehouse. Whoever lent his premises for this purpose might satisfy himself that no improper persons should be admitted, by taking the names of the whole club from two or three steady men, who could be answerable for the demeanour of the rest.

Any interference beyond this would be unwise, unless in so far as the men might voluntarily consult their masters from time to time; and their disposition to do so must depend wholly upon the relations of kindness and mutual confidence subsisting between the parties. If any difficulty should be found in obtaining the use of a room from their masters, there seems to be no good reason why they should not have the use of any school-room that may be in their neighbourhood; and one room of this kind may accommodate several societies; three, if the meetings are twice a week; and six, if they only meet once.

In the *third* place, it is evident that the want of time preventing the classes of whom we are treating from pursuing a systematic course of education in all its details, a more summary and compendious method of instruction must be pursued by them. The great majority must be content with never going beyond a certain point, and with reaching that point by the most expeditious route. A few, thus initiated in the truths of science, will no doubt push their attainments much farther; and for these the works in common use will suffice; but for the multitude it will be most essential that works should be prepared adapted to their circumstances. Thus, in teaching them geometry, it is not necessary to go through the whole steps of that beautiful system, by which the most general and remote truths are connected with the few simple definitions and axioms; enough will be accomplished, if they are made to perceive the nature of mathematical investigation, and learn the leading properties of figure. In like manner, they may be taught the doctrines of mechanics with a much more slender previous

knowledge of geometry and algebra, than the common elementary works on dynamicks presuppose in the reader. Hence, a most essential service will be rendered to the cause of knowledge by him who shall devote his time to the composition of elementary treatises on the mathematics, sufficiently clear, and yet sufficiently compendious, to exemplify the method of reasoning employed in that science, and to impart an accurate knowledge of the most fundamental and useful propositions, with their application to practical purposes, and treatises upon natural philosophy, which may teach the great principles of physics, and their practical application, to readers who have but a general knowledge of mathematics, or who are wholly ignorant of the science beyond the common rules of arithmetic. Nor let it be supposed, that the time thus bestowed is given merely to instruct the poor in the rudiments of philosophy, though this would of itself be an object sufficiently brilliant to allure men of the noblest ambition; for what higher achievement did the most sublime philosophy ever propose to itself than to elevate the views and refine the character of the great mass of mankind? But if extending the bounds of science itself be the grand aim of philosophers, they indirectly, but surely, accomplish this object, who enable thousands to speculate and experiment for one to whom the path of investigation is now open. It is not necessary that all who are taught, or even any considerable proportion, should go beyond the rudiments; but whoever feels within himself a desire and an aptitude to proceed further, will do so,—and the chances of discovery, both in the arts and in science itself, will be thus indefinitely multiplied. Indeed, those discoveries immediately connected with experiment and observation are most likely to be made by men, whose lives, being spent in the midst of mechanical operations, are at the same time instructed in the general principles upon which these depend, and trained betimes to habits of speculation.

Fourthly, The preparation of elementary works is not the only, nor, at first, is it the most valuable service that can be rendered towards economizing the time of the labouring classes. The institution of Lectures is, of all the helps that can be given, the most valuable, where circumstances permit, that is, in towns of a certain size. Much may thus be taught, even without any other instruction; but, combined with reading, and subservient to it, the effects of public lectures are great indeed, especially in the present deficiency of proper elementary works. The students are enabled to read with advantage; things are explained to them which no books sufficiently illustrate; access is afforded to teachers who can remove the difficulties which occur perpetually in the reading of uneducated persons; a word may often suffice to get rid of some obstacle which would have impeded the unassisted student's progress for days; and then, whatever requires the performance of experiments to become intelligible can only be learnt by the bulk of mankind at a lecture, inasmuch as the wealthiest alone can have such lessons in private, and none but the most highly gifted can hope to master those branches of science without seeing the experimental illustrations.

The branches of knowledge to which these observations chiefly apply, are Mechanical Philosophy and Chemistry, both as being more intimately connected with the arts, and as requiring more explanation and illustration by experiment. But the Mathematics, Astronomy, and

Geology, the two former especially, are well fitted for being taught publicly, and are of great practical use. Nor is there any reason why Moral and Political Philosophy should not be explained in public lectures, though they may be learnt by reading far more easily than the physical sciences.

In all plans of this description it is absolutely necessary that the expenses should mainly be defrayed by those for whose benefit they are contrived. It is the province of the rich to lay the foundation, by making certain advances which are required in the first instance, and enabling the poor to come forward, both as learners and contributors. But no such scheme can either take a deep root, or spread over the country so as to produce the good for which it is calculated, unless its support is derived from those who are chiefly to reap its benefits. Those benefits are, as far as regards instruction in the principles upon which the arts depend, of a nature eminently fitted to improve the condition of the learners, and to repay, in actual profit, far more than the cost required. But, even for instruction in other branches of learning of a more general description, and only tending to improve the moral and intellectual character, a fund is provided, by the substitution of refined and cheap and harmless gratifications, in the stead of luxuries, which are both grosser and more expensive, hurtful to the health, and wasteful of time. The yearly cost of a lecture in the larger cities, where enlightened and public-spirited men may be found willing to give instruction for nothing, is indeed considerably less than in smaller places, where a compensation must be made for the lecturer's time and work. But it seems to us advisable, that, even where gratuitous assistance could be obtained, something like an adequate remuneration should be afforded, both to preserve the principle of independence among the working classes, and to secure the more accurate and regular discharge of the duty. We shall therefore suppose, that the lectures, as well as the current expenses of the room, and where there are experiments, of the apparatus, are paid for; and still it appears by no means an undertaking beyond the reach of those classes. The most expensive courses of teaching will be those requiring apparatus; but then those are likewise the most directly profitable to the scholars. Contributions may be reckoned upon to begin the plan, including the original purchase of apparatus; and then we may estimate the yearly cost, which alone will fall upon the members of the Association. The hire of a room may be reckoned at thirty pounds; the salary of a lecturer, forty; wear and tear of apparatus, twenty; assistant and servant, ten; clerk or collector, ten; fire and lamps, five; printing and advertising, fifteen; making in all 130*l*. But if two, or three courses are delivered in the same room, the expenses of each will be reduced in proportion. Suppose three, the room may probably be had for fifty pounds, the printing for twenty, and the servants for thirty; so that the expense of each course will be reduced to about a hundred pounds. Each course may occupy six months of weekly lectures; consequently, if only a hundred artisans are to be found who can spare a shilling a week, one lecture may be carried on for 130*l*.; and if 120 artisans can be found to spare a shilling a week, three courses may be carried on during the year, and each person attend the whole. This calculation, however, supposes a very inconsiderable town. If the families engaged in trade and handicrafts have, one with another, a single person contributing, the number of 100

answers to a population of only 770, supposing the proportion of persons engaged in trade and handicrafts to be the same as in the West Riding of Yorkshire; and 710, taking the proportion of Lancashire. If, indeed, we take the proportions in the manufacturing towns, it will answer in some cases to a population of 5500, and in others of little more than 500. But even taking the proportion from towns in the least manufacturing counties, as Huntingdonshire, the population required to furnish 100 will not exceed 900, which is a town of about 200 houses. One of three times the size is but an inconsiderable place; and yet in such a place, upon a very moderate computation, 200 persons might easily be found to spare sixpence a week all the year round, which would be amply sufficient for two lectures. In the larger towns, where 5 or 600 persons might associate, five shillings a quarter would be sufficient to carry on three or four lectures, and leave between 150*l.* or 200*l.* a-year for the purchase of books. The most complete establishment will always be that in which a library is combined with the lecture; and it is advisable that, in places where at first there is not money or spirit enough to begin with both, a library only should be established, to which the lecture may afterwards be added.

The men themselves ought to have the chief share in the management of these concerns. This is essential to the success, and also to the independence of the undertaking; nor is there the least reason to apprehend mismanagement. If benefit societies are, upon the whole, well conducted, we may rely upon institutions being still better conducted, where the improvement of the mind being the object, those only will ever take a part who are desirous of their own advancement in knowledge, and of the general instruction of the class to which they belong. Neither is there any fear that the suggestions of persons in a higher station, and of more ample information, may not be duly attended to. Gratitude for the assistance received and the advice offered, together with a conviction that the only motive for interfering is the good of the establishment, will give at least its just weight to the recommendations of patrons; and if it were not always so, far better would it be to see such influence fail entirely, than to run the risk of the apathy which might be occasioned among the men, and the abuse of the institutors themselves, which might frequently be produced by excluding from the control of their affairs those whose interests are the only object in view. The influence of patrons is always sure to have at the least its proper weight, as long as their object plainly is merely to promote the good of those for whom the Institution was founded; and as soon as they are actuated by any other views, it is very fit that their influence should cease. There is nearly as little reason to apprehend that the necessity of discussing, at meetings of the members, the affairs of the Institution, will give rise to a spirit of controversy and a habit of making speeches. Those meetings for private business will of course be held very seldom; and a feeling may always be expected to prevail, that the continuance of the establishment depends upon preserving union, notwithstanding any diversity of opinion in matters of detail, and upon keeping the discussion of rules and regulations subordinate to the attendance upon the lectures, the main object of the establishment. The time when information and advice is most wanted, with other assistance from the wealthy and the well informed, is at the beginning of the undertaking; and at that time the influence

of those patrons will necessarily be the most powerful. Much depends upon a right course being taken at first; proper rules laid down; fit subjects selected for lecture; good teachers chosen—and upon all these matters the opinions and wishes of those who chiefly contribute to found the several institutions are sure to have a very great weight.

A REPLY TO THE OBJECTIONS URGED AGAINST THE SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE.*

ALTHOUGH there is a good deal in this discourse with which it is impossible for us to agree, yet the tone of moderation which the reverend author preserves through the greater portion of his remarks must be mentioned as extremely praiseworthy, and as somewhat rare in such controversies. It must be admitted, too, that the subject which he has undertaken to discuss is one fairly belonging to the province of the religious instructor, and which he may handle without incurring the smallest blame for narrowness or illiberality—the superiority of religious to temporal knowledge, and the risks we run from too exclusive an attention to the latter. While others are instructing the community in literature and science, it is, beyond all doubt, the duty of the clergy to give the information which is necessary for its religious improvement; and, provided there be no misrepresentations used, they may fairly urge the greater importance of that kind of knowledge, and take the requisite pains to prevent other pursuits from interfering with the attainment of it. A report was prevalent that Dr. Shuttleworth had stood forth to sound the alarm against educating the people in those branches of science which Laplace declared them fitted to learn, and from which Lord Liverpool indignantly deprecated their being excluded. The sermon, in which this warning was said to be proclaimed, is now before us; and it is with great pleasure that we testify that it is any thing rather than a confirmation of the rumour. Some few matters are perhaps not stated with perfect candour; others are represented a little inaccurately; but there is nothing like an attempt to raise an outcry of a religious kind, or to point the thunders of the church against the secular instructors of the people. On the contrary, it seems substantially intended to reconcile the pursuits recommended by the preacher with a large allowance of scientific improvement.

After observing, that the extraordinary pains taken to diffuse knowledge in the present day, though calculated to excite feelings of ‘pride and self-congratulation,’ are yet fitted, at the same time, to make us ‘ask ourselves, where all this will end?’ he proceeds to show in what consists the dangers of a disproportionate attention to the pursuits of science. And it is a singular thing, that he assumes the friends of popular education to exclude from their plans every branch of knowledge, except mathematical and physical science. The following

* Dr. Shuttleworth’s Sermon; preached in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, May 8th, 1828.—Vol. xlviii. page 520. December, 1828.

passage contains a great deal of important truth respecting the value of intellectual improvement, which the author had, in the sentence immediately preceding, distinctly stated that it was not his wish to depreciate, but only to show the necessity of connecting with religion. But it closes with a most inaccurate suggestion, which, being further enforced in the next passage, requires some animadversion.

‘ Were we to estimate the whole of the advantages resulting to a nation from the pursuits of science and general literature, solely by what may in a familiar acceptation of the term be considered their *value*, that is to say, by their immediate tendency to promote such discoveries as may be exclusively useful for the acquisition of wealth, or the accommodation of our social existence, we should, I acknowledge, be taking a much too contracted view of the subject, and greatly undervaluing the many momentous blessings which we derive from them. The laws and principles of mechanism, the physical combinations and properties of the elements, and the profound truths derivable from the abstract calculation of figures or of numbers, may be made familiar to thousands; yet the inventive faculty, which derives from such knowledge the germ of new and valuable discoveries, which are to form part of the intellectual wealth of future ages, is, by the sage economy of Providence, dispensed but to a few. It, however, by no means follows, that those persons whose talents do not qualify them to become benefactors to mankind by their inventions, are not, therefore, elevated in the scale of sentient beings by the mere possession of scientific attainments. Knowledge (if by that term we mean to imply nothing more than the means for the acquisition of a specific end) may, it is true, be considered in one point of view as unprofitable, where that end is not attained, and where it terminates in barren contemplation: but, on the other hand, (when we recollect that its tendency is to develope the energies, and to give us a taste for the exquisite pleasures of our spiritual nature, and consequently to make us more indifferent to the gross animal enjoyments which we participate in common with the brutes,) it may, with no less confidence, be pronounced to be in itself intrinsically good, though, like all other gifts of Providence, liable to be perverted by abuse. Such, accordingly, is the judgment expressed respecting it by the Word of Revelation. “ Behold,” says the Almighty, with reference to the fall of our first parents, and whilst pronouncing that fearful judicial sentence which was to operate so fatally upon their descendants, “ behold, man is become *like one of us* to know good from evil:” from which words we must necessarily, I think, derive the conclusion, that, though knowledge may be *accidentally* dangerous from its inappositeness to the party possessing it, and sinful, where its acquisition implies the breach of a command or perversity of disposition, still its *abstract* and *original* tendency is to add to the dignity and perfection of the being of whom it is an attribute. And in this point of view will a Christian, and especially a Protestant Christian, who knows how much of the purity of his religious belief may be attributed to the dissemination of general literature, be disposed to consider it: not wishing for a single moment to limit the high gratifications of scientific research to any more favoured or privileged classes of the community, or to check, in any one instance, the progress of legitimate inquiry, but only anxious that the most easily perverted of all the transcendent gifts of the Almighty be not transformed from a blessing into a

‘ curse ; only anxious, that whilst investigating the mighty wonders of the physical universe, they forget not that great Being who called that universe into existence ; and that they mistake not the impatient eagerness of newly-excited curiosity, which loves to depreciate every thing established, and to ponder over its own speculations upon what it conceives to be original principles, rather than to submit to the wisdom inculcated by experience, for that comprehensive grasp of intellect, whose real characteristic is sobriety and caution.’

The risk which students of natural science are here supposed to run, of forgetting the great Author of nature, appears wholly chimerical. But the author immediately afterwards states it in a way much more incorrect, and, as we take it, wholly contrary to the truth of the case. ‘ It is an acknowledged, and a no less painful than perplexing fact,’ he says, ‘ that even well-educated persons, whose studies have particularly led them to the investigation of the beautiful and astounding mechanism of the universe, and of the economy of the animal world, have often been disposed to scepticism with regard to the existence and providence of a God.’ It is Dr. Shuttleworth’s general practice to express himself with many qualifications, and to avoid all broad assertions ; but this passage, though worded cautiously, plainly means, that those who study natural philosophy are apt to doubt the existence of the Deity ; than which, we will venture to repeat, any thing more unfounded in fact could not have been stated. It might almost suffice, one would think, to name the names of Newton and of Boyle, or of Barrow and Bacon, to vindicate from this reproach the studies to which they were devoted. It is among metaphysicians, surely, rather than natural philosophers, that we shall find the greatest number of sceptics ; although the philosophy of mind has any thing rather than a natural tendency to produce unbelief ; but it may be taught without a constant reference to the power and wisdom of the Creator ; whereas, we doubt if a single work, professing to teach the elements of physical science, especially if framed for popular use, can be found, in which the proofs of design manifest in the structure of the material world are not stated with more or less earnestness and particularity.

However, Dr. Shuttleworth having once laid down his assumption, goes on to argue on it as clear and admitted. ‘ Many causes,’ he says, ‘ might be alleged to account for this mortifying fact ;’ meaning the groundless and ridiculous fancy, that natural philosophy makes men atheists. Then, after an attempt at explaining why the thing should be what it certainly is not, he adds,—‘ Be the real explanation of this circumstance what it may, *the fact* is unfortunately certain, that a mind may not only possibly, but probably, be imbued with an accurate and extensive knowledge of that vast aggregate of wonders, the material universe, yet fail to draw from it that great moral conclusion, which it would seem, above all others, most calculated to announce ;’ meaning, we suppose, the being and attributes of the Deity. And then he goes on to infer, that if men, profoundly versed in natural science, find it so difficult ‘ to lend their minds at the same time to the eager pursuit of physics, and the awful impressions of religion,’ the danger must be still greater with persons superficially informed. It would be throwing labour away, to answer arguments resting on the assumption of what is notoriously most groundless. If Dr. Shuttleworth only means to state the danger of a too eager and exclusive study of natural knowledge relaxing men’s religious feelings, he describes a risk common to

all occupations of a worldly nature, whether speculative or active ; but far less imminent in the case of physical science, than in that of almost any other pursuit, because its tendency is perpetually to lift the mind towards the contemplation of the wisdom displayed in the structure of the universe. . If, however, there should be found any tendency in such studies to produce the effect dreaded by our author, the remedy is in the learning and genius of those whose labours are devoted to spiritual subjects. They may render the topics to which they are devoted, attractive and awakening ; they may fit them for the wise as well as for the uninformed ; they may combine science with eloquence in handling the weighty matters intrusted to them ; and, above all, they may overcome all repugnance to hear their exhortations and receive their lessons, by candidly allowing its just value to that sound learning, which, albeit, of a secular kind, is found not only compatible with devotional feelings, but eminently calculated to keep them alive, by engrafting them upon the imperishable stock of reason.

Dr. Shuttleworth's doubts (for they hardly assume a more positive form) of the expediency or safety of the extensive efforts now making to diffuse scientific information, class themselves under three heads ; — the risk of making the learners superficially acquainted with important subjects — the exclusion of moral science from popular education — and the neglect of religious instruction. We might perhaps more correctly say, that these are the points discussed by a respectable class of persons to whom Dr. Shuttleworth belongs, and who, without any enmity to the cause of education, have certain alarms upon the success of a new and vast experiment, as they deem it, and are sincerely desirous to have so important a subject considered in all its bearings. Dr. Shuttleworth deals with it in such passages as the following, which we extract, both in justice to him and those who think with him, and also to show that they are sceptics, rather than dogmatists, upon the question :—

‘ The fact is, that there are disadvantages and inconveniences un-
 ‘ avoidably accompanying the attempt to convey the more abstruse dis-
 ‘ coveries of science to persons whose otherwise laborious occupations
 ‘ must necessarily render such knowledge to a great degree superficial,
 ‘ which attach but slightly, if at all, to the professedly literary classes.
 ‘ It may seem invidious and paradoxical to say, that the road to science
 ‘ may be made too easy ; but such is undoubtedly the fact. It will
 ‘ be acknowledged by all who have reflected upon this important sub-
 ‘ ject, that it is not so much the ultimate physical truths elicited by
 ‘ the process of experimental investigation, as the disciplining of the
 ‘ understanding, by the exercise which it acquires in the progress of
 ‘ the research, which constitutes the true value of a scientific educa-
 ‘ tion. And, accordingly, it is to this habitual exercise of the intuitive
 ‘ faculties that we must attribute that practical acuteness in men of
 ‘ real science, which enables them, with a seemingly instinctive
 ‘ readiness of perception, to elicit from each experiment upon the
 ‘ various operations of nature its exact and legitimate influence. The
 ‘ mind which thus proceeds step by step from discovery to discovery,
 ‘ combating with difficulties as it advances, and learning, by mortifying
 ‘ experience, that what the vulgar consider as demonstrable knowledge
 ‘ is often but a plausible, or at the best a probable, surmise, will
 ‘ generally be too well aware of the infinitude of the subject-matter of
 ‘ science to be very dogmatical, even with regard to those opinions

‘ which it conceives to be most firmly established. But he, who by
 ‘ the aid of popular compendiums and desultory instruction, arrives at
 ‘ the possession of the ultimate discoveries of learned men, without having
 ‘ himself toiled through the painful process of gradual investigation,
 ‘ will not unfrequently find such an acquisition more than counter-
 ‘ balanced by the moral, and even intellectual, disadvantages attending
 ‘ knowledge so ill assimilated. Unaware from that painful experience,
 ‘ resulting from frequent disappointment, how many are the aspects of
 ‘ plausible falsehood and error; how many lurking fallacies may be
 ‘ sheltered under an attractive and apparently simple theory; and con-
 ‘ sequently how natural it is for an eager and inexperienced mind to
 ‘ overrate its strength; such a person is too frequently more impatient
 ‘ in the pursuit of discovery than the circumstances of man’s nature
 ‘ would warrant. To a mind thus excited, the first bursting gleam of
 ‘ knowledge appears nearly equivalent with its final consummation:
 ‘ and accordingly, whilst under the influence of this impression, every
 ‘ existing institution, and almost every established opinion, appears as
 ‘ a remnant of antiquated prejudice, which the human reason, shaking
 ‘ itself from it slumbers, must be eager to disavow; the countervailing
 ‘ caution, on the other hand, which suggests how rarely the result of any
 ‘ great change has come up to the sanguine expectations of its first
 ‘ movers, is contemned as cowardly and dishonest.

‘ In addition to the desultoriness and incompleteness of the actual
 ‘ knowledge conveyed, a want also of adaptation to the peculiar habits and
 ‘ intellectual wants of the parties whom it is intended to instruct, must,
 ‘ I think, be admitted to form one of the objections to the benevolent
 ‘ attempts which have been recently made to familiarize the labouring
 ‘ classes with the abstruser departments of philosophy. That the main
 ‘ faculties of their minds will often be rather unsettled than strengthened,
 ‘ by these ostentatious acquirements, may, without any breach of
 ‘ charity, be surmised. But this not all. From an idea which our carnal
 ‘ notions of policy and expediency too readily dispose us to take up,
 ‘ that the word science is to be applied almost exclusively to the in-
 ‘ vestigation of the phenomena of the material world, the enumeration
 ‘ of the departments of knowledge requisite for the supposed adequate
 ‘ instruction of individuals, as regulated by public opinion, has, in one
 ‘ respect at least, become fearfully deficient. And hence, whilst every
 ‘ study which has reference to our mere bodily wants, is pursued with
 ‘ the most unremitting attention, that infinitely more important, and, as
 ‘ all who have made themselves acquainted with the labyrinths and
 ‘ perversity of the human heart will readily acknowledge, that far more
 ‘ difficult branch of wisdom, the science of morals, is apt to be treated
 ‘ with neglect, as what will come spontaneously; or with contempt, as
 ‘ what may be neglected with impunity.

‘ Not so, however, thought our equally laborious, though despised,
 ‘ forefathers: and not so thought the wisest part of even heathen
 ‘ antiquity. Darkened as were the minds of the latter to all which is
 ‘ truly sublime in religion and morals, even *they* considered the great
 ‘ questions which have reference to man’s duty as a moral and respon-
 ‘ sible agent, as affording the noblest topics of conversation which
 ‘ could exercise philosophers in their retirement. But as society ad-
 ‘ vances in fancied refinement, there is a worldliness and selfishness
 ‘ which creeps into and mixes itself, as with every thing else, so with

‘ the most vigorous exertions of the intellect. Knowledge, in a
 ‘ luxurious and ambitious age, soon begins to be estimated according
 ‘ to our hastily-formed notions of its usefulness; and that usefulness is
 ‘ again itself measured by its reference to our bodily wants, con-
 ‘ veniences, and pleasures : and thus an undue preponderance is given
 ‘ to the interests of our carnal nature over our spiritual, by those very
 ‘ studies and pursuits which appear, at first sight, particularly adapted
 ‘ for the elevation of the latter.’

Upon each of the three topics alluded to, rather than discussed, in these passages, we must be allowed to offer a very few remarks, principally to set the objectors, or doubters, right, upon the matter of fact.

First, as to the mischief of superficial knowledge : This assumes the form sometimes of an apprehension that the community will only know a little of what ought to be known profoundly ; sometimes of a dread that ill effects will arise from such imperfect knowledge. To us, we confess, both fears seem equally unsubstantial. That it would be far better to know the whole than a part ; to learn science as philosophers learn it, than as the bulk of mankind must ever, from mere want of time, be content to learn it, even in the utmost state of refinement to which they can be imagined to reach, is a proposition too obvious to require proof. But it by no means follows that something may not be known, and usefully known, because much more remains unknown to us. They who cry out against the superficial learning, which alone the people are likely to imbibe, forget that all of us are necessarily superficial upon by far the greatest portion of our acquirements. It is well if, among the common run of well-educated persons, each knows some one branch of some one science, or department of literature, thoroughly, and has with the others a slight and general acquaintance. The greater probability is, that very few of even these classes know any one subject deeply and completely. Nay, among professed philosophers, how rare is it to find one who is perfectly conversant with all that is to be learned on any one branch of knowledge. But the comparison is to be made between the bulk of the community, the middle and working classes, who have their time occupied in gaining their bread, and the generality of those whose time, both in youth and in after life, is much at their command, and who form the body of what are called well-educated persons.

It is quite certain, that the former may learn enough at their leisure hours, by reading and by attending lectures, to make it absurd for the latter to despise their acquirements as superficial. Compared with the knowledge of professed cultivators of science, both classes will always know superficially ; but the one are just as likely to understand accurately, and recollect distinctly, what they learn, as the other. Then, as to the hackneyed topic of ‘ a little learning,’ so often sung and said to be dangerous—there is a greater danger surely in learning nothing at all—a danger, too, that is the longer the worse ; whereas the other risk is sure to lessen, as hardly any person ever made one acquisition in knowledge without being led on to make another. We need not surely stop to refute the idle notion so often exposed, that slight knowledge makes men conceited and ungovernable ; to which figurative illustrations are added, about people staggering in the twilight, fully as inapplicable to the argument as Pope’s singularly unhappy one about

drinking, though not perhaps so contrary to the fact as that lamentable piece of false logic and false metaphor.* The mistake in all these cases is, to charge knowledge with the sins of ignorance. The twilight is inconvenient, not because it is half light, but because it is half dark; the slight knowledge does harm only because it is by the supposition confined to a few; for if it were general, it would cease to be a distinction, and to cause any uneasy feeling in its possessor, except an impatience of ignorance, and a desire to remove it by learning more.

The supposition that scientific education must confine the ideas of the people to physical science, and fix their thoughts upon objects of sense, is, if possible, still more groundless. It is not true, in point of fact, that those who are anxiously devoting themselves to the education of the community are only bent upon teaching physics. Dr. Shuttleworth appears most unaccountably to suppose, that science means natural philosophy only. We will venture to say, that if he attends to any of the proceedings either of societies or of individuals engaged in this great and good work, he will find them as much occupied in preparing for the diffusion of moral as of physical science. It is impossible to do all at once; and, undoubtedly, if the principles of morals, and of political learning, had been first of all expounded to the working classes, there would have been (beside other obvious inconveniences) the risk of exciting prejudice and clamour among the enemies of education. Dr. Shuttleworth, and those who think as he does, are far too candid and too well-informed to raise such cavils; but others would not have been slow to cry out, and the educators would have been charged (perhaps not unjustly) with beginning at the wrong end. However, we entirely agree with our author, that a system of instruction is most imperfect into which the philosophy of morals does not enter as an important branch.

The last objection, or doubt, is, that religious knowledge may be kept too much in the back ground, while secular learning assumes an exclusive share of popular attention. We have, in part, answered this already; but it is connected with matters of such extreme importance, as to require a little further discussion; and we cannot proceed a step, without perceiving how much the alarm is founded on a misstatement of facts; a misapprehension of some, and an overlooking of others.

It is not true — it is not any thing like the truth — that the present age is distinguished for its efforts in promoting secular, to the neglect of religious improvement. There never was a period in the history of the church when a greater, we might say, when so great a number of persons took a lively interest in disseminating the knowledge of practical divinity. Witness the unprecedented exertions made for the diffusion of the Scriptures and of religious tracts — witness the number of associations for promoting religious knowledge — witness the Sunday schools, in connexion with the Established Church, everywhere planted, and at which 550,000 children are taught, beside all those in connexion with various classes of dissenters, perhaps equally numerous. Indeed, we might take into this account the day-schools taught on the national plan, because the doctrines of the church are there inculcated, and her liturgy used. But as something beside religion is taught in the schools, of whatever denomination, and in Sunday as well as day-

* 'For shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
'But *drinking deeply* sobers us again.'

schools, let us look only to the many societies whose objects are confined to the diffusion of religious knowledge, and the large funds at their disposal, devoted to this great purpose; and let us reflect, that all these efforts are confined to religious instruction exclusively. Surely it can no more be contended, that those who labour to propagate the love of science, and to place the means of learning it within the reach of the community at large, are obstructing the progress of religious knowledge, because they confine their exertions to the worldly sciences, than it can with justice be charged against religious associations, or the individuals who co-operate with them, that they are keeping men ignorant of all things save theology, because they only disseminate the Bible and religious books. Each must needs confine their exertions to one walk, otherwise neither could work to a profit. Nor ought we to forget, in this question, the important provision which the law of the land has made for the promotion of religious instruction, by a body of men set apart for that special purpose, and the almost equally numerous body of sectarian teachers, whose lives are alike devoted to inculcating the same matters. These, like the associations formed in aid of their labours, teach religion, and nothing else.

It never was objected to them, that they kept the community ignorant of other branches of knowledge. As little can it be objected to those who supply instruction in these other branches, that they keep the people ignorant of religion. The existence of a class of religious teachers, and of so many societies, who confine their exertions to religion exclusively, renders it wholly unnecessary for those whose exertions are pointed to the diffusion of other kinds of learning, to bestow any part of their attention upon religious education. It never can be objected to the latter class of persons, that they adopt the plan best fitted to unite the members of all religious communities in the important work of furthering sound learning of a secular description; and it is equally absurd to dread, that the spread of such learning may prove inimical to the interests of religion. Such fears cannot be seriously entertained by any who really feel convinced that their belief is well-grounded in reason.

We have said, that, generally speaking, Dr. Shuttleworth's sermon is conceived in a spirit of praiseworthy liberality and fairness; and with a very few exceptions, the lovers of freedom and tolerance have no reason to complain of his remarks. There is one passage, however, of which we cannot approve. We have no objection to the preacher holding up, in strong colours, the danger of 'forgetting God; especially ' when his accumulated blessings make such forgetfulness and ingratitude the most portentous; when our minds are elated with seeming ' prosperity, and puffed out with the self-confidence of imagined wisdom.' It is his duty to remind his hearers of the inferiority of all other subjects to the concerns of religion; and in such passages as the following, he performs that duty eloquently, and, at the same time, liberally and wisely, except that he confines science to one branch.

' If, then, such be the prevailing danger of the present day, and such ' I conceive it to be, let the Ministers of the everlasting Gospel be ' proportionably energetic on their part in the performance of their ' solemn and indispensable duty; not, from an unworthy timidity, discouraging or depreciating the progress of intellectual research, (for ' next to the purifying influence of religious truth, we cannot but rank ' the high and tranquillizing enjoyments of physical science among the

‘ foremost gifts of Providence,) but pointing out, with sober and benevolent caution, the seductions and deceitfulness which beset even this most attractive path in life’s journey. Let them go forth, like Paul amid the schools of Athenian philosophy, and silence for a moment the din of worldly speculation, by the single, awakening, and humiliating doctrine of Christ crucified, of the necessity of divine sanctification, of repentance, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. Let them remind those who imagine that the investigation of the material creation is the most appropriate occupation of their intellect, that, after all, such studies, however attractive, partake of the perishable character of that world whose phenomena they investigate, and like it shall pass away; that they are innocent or praiseworthy only in proportion as they are made compatible with, and secondary in our estimation to, the paramount interests of our spiritual nature; and that, accordingly, there is a point beyond which they can scarcely be pursued with perfect safety: that point, I mean, when from a too continued and exclusive attention to corporeal objects, there is always a danger, even to the best disposed minds, lest their moral susceptibilities should become imperceptibly weakened, and their hearts gradually closed against the solemn impressions of religious conviction.’

Nor do we object to his inference, from the state of the times, in favour of the having ‘ an established order of men, detached from the turmoil of worldly concerns, and consecrated by the most sacred obligations to the preaching of that spiritual holiness, which the eagerness of temporal speculations and interests has so strong a tendency to induce us to neglect.’ We have already stated, that if there be any risk of science diverting the minds of the people from religion, the safeguard is to be found in the redoubled exertions of its ministers, not in attacks upon knowledge, and opposition to its diffusion. But we cannot think that our author takes a sound view of the peculiar benefits of religion in the following passage, where he seems to value it chiefly for the assistance he deems it peculiarly, and indeed exclusively, calculated to render the law and the government of the state.

‘ It has been said, and often repeated, that he, who can cause two blades of corn to grow where only one existed formerly, may be considered as the greatest benefactor to his species. There is, undoubtedly, much truth, but there is also some degree of fallacy, conveyed in this assertion. Were the whole mass of human sustenance produced by the soil now under cultivation to be increased two-fold by the efforts of human ingenuity and industry, we may assert it, as an undoubted truth, that the only effect, after the lapse of a few years, would be found to have been the multiplication, in a like proportion, of the number of its occupants, with probably at the same time a far increased proportion of misery and crime beyond that with which society is afflicted at the present moment. Whether the simple and contented habits which in many parts of this country have not yet, we trust, given way to more artificial feelings, would be under such circumstances well exchanged for the feverish excitement, the ungratified wants, and the selfish passions fostered by an over-crowded population, may be matter of serious doubt. Even as a question of political strength, the danger resulting to a nation thus situated, from the prevalence of jealous and unsocial feelings, would probably far more than counterbalance any accession of physical power which might otherwise be calculated upon from the mere increase of the

‘ numbers of its citizens. The real fact is, that the true benefactor to
 ‘ his species, the true practical friend to the best interests of his coun-
 ‘ trymen, is he who, by making them more religious, makes them at the
 ‘ same time more contented, more social, and more obedient to the
 ‘ laws. Without that patience, that brotherly love, and that deference
 ‘ to those in authority, for conscience sake, which a deep-rooted feeling
 ‘ of piety alone can systematically inculcate, and maintain unshaken
 ‘ through every species of trial, the bands of human society must ever
 ‘ be loosely knit together. We may, it is true, imagine an irreligious
 ‘ people elevating itself for a time into wealth and greatness; we may
 ‘ conceive it pre-eminent meanwhile in physical science, and making
 ‘ the mighty elements of nature the ministers to its conveniences and
 ‘ minutest luxuries: but selfishness, inveterate selfishness, the very
 ‘ source of all disunion, whether domestic or political, will be the
 ‘ moving principle of the whole. The coarse attractions of wealth, the
 ‘ vulgar impatience of worldly ambition, the jealousies of incompatible
 ‘ interests, and the irritation of hopeless poverty, will be turning each
 ‘ man’s hand against his neighbour, and the whole mass of the commu-
 ‘ nity, however apparently strong, and wise, and prosperous, will be
 ‘ intrinsically weak, like a vast mountain of sand ready to be dispersed
 ‘ into its individual particles by the first tempest which passes over it.’

This passage opens with a mis-quotation of the saying to which it refers. Dean Swift never said, ‘ that the man who caused two blades
 ‘ of corn to grow where only one existed before,’ was the greatest be-
 nefactor of his species; but only, that he ‘ deserved better of mankind,
 ‘ and did more essential service to his country, than the whole race of
 ‘ politicians put together,’ which he well might, and yet be very far from
 the greatest benefactor of his species.* But this is a trifling matter;
 what we are jealous of is the holding of religion as of use, as ‘ alone
 ‘ systematically inculcating deference to those in authority, for con-
 ‘ science sake,’ and as alone ‘ maintaining that deference unshaken
 ‘ through every species of trial.’ One who understood Christianity far
 better, as he practised its precepts more conscientiously, than Dean
 Swift, we mean Archdeacon Paley, has long ago shown, that it has
 given no directions whatever upon the extent to which obedience is
 required. The duty of obedience, where fit and lawful, it undoubtedly
 inculcates; but it leaves to considerations of a secular description the
 determination of the point to which ‘ *the powers* ’ should be obeyed; and
 as to any alliance between church and state, (if that was in our author’s
 contemplation, which we hardly think his words warrant us in sup-
 posing,) Dr. Paley, it is well known, holds the sound doctrine, sound in
 a religious as well as a political view, that religion can only be debased,
 corrupted, and abused, (we cite his own language almost to the word,) by
 such an association.

Upon the whole, and with the few exceptions we have noted, we have
 derived great satisfaction from the perusal of this discourse, considering,
 that it is professedly intended as a correction to the supposed excesses

* Dr. Shuttleworth’s ‘ *blades of corn,* ’ &c. cannot be said to retain much more
 of the Dean’s accuracy than of his point. The sentence is as follows: ‘ And he
 ‘ (King of Brobdignag) gave it for his opinion, that whoever could make two ears
 ‘ of corn, or two blades of grass, to grow upon a spot of ground, where only one
 ‘ grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to
 ‘ his country, than the whole race of politicians put together.’

of those who are bent on the better education of the community. For it shows no disposition to deny the value of merely human learning; and it, for the most part, seeks to apply the right remedy, if there should be found any mischief. Above all, it seeks not to counteract the efforts which the friends of knowledge are making in every quarter. Nothing is said which can tend to alienate a single religious person from his union with them, or to damp his zeal in the cause. The man who heard and profited by the sermon, and the reverend person who preached it, might, with perfect consistency, enrol themselves on the morrow among the benefactors to a mechanics' institution, as the late Bishop of Durham did; or join with other ornaments of the hierarchy in distributing cheap tracts, which bring the most important branches of human knowledge within the reach of the people. Of course, neither the distinguished prelate, nor his coadjutors, ever begrudged the objects of their bountiful and judicious care the means of religious instruction through other channels, and at the fitting seasons.*

THE LONDON UNIVERSITY.†

Few things have ever appeared to us more inexplicable than the cry which it has pleased those who arrogate to themselves the exclusive praise of loyalty and orthodoxy, to raise against the projected University of London. In most of those publications which are distinguished by zeal for the Church and the Government, the scheme is never mentioned but with affected contempt or unaffected fury. The Academic pulpits have resounded with invectives against it; and many even of the most liberal and enlightened members of the old foundations seem to contemplate it with very uncomfortable feelings.

* On the important subject of Popular Education, it would be impossible to comprise, within the limits to which I am confined, even an epitome of the valuable matter in the E. Review. Since the commencement of that journal, it has occupied a conspicuous place in its pages, and been discussed with an earnestness and ability commensurate with its vast and increasing importance. I have elsewhere adverted to the Essays on the Lancasterian System and on Mr. Brougham's project for a National Plan of Education for England. I refer to the following articles with pleasure, as well entitled to the reader's attention:—A judicious Recommendation of Infant Schools. Vol. xxxviii. page 437.—An Account of the Scottish Parochial Schools. Vol. xlv. page 107.—A Refutation of the Arguments against enlightening the Minds of the Lower Orders. Vol. xlii. page 450.—An Exposure of High Church Opinions on Popular Education. Vol. xlii. page 206; and Vol. xxxv. page 509.—Sketch of the Hazlewood System of Instruction. Vol. xli. page 315.—A Review of the Edgeworth Plan of Education. Vol. xxxiv. page 121.—Two very interesting Sketches of Mr. Fellenburgh's Establishments for the Poor. Vol. xxxi. page 150. Vol. xxxii. page 488. The proceedings of that excellent Institution, the Society for the Diffusion of Knowledge, have latterly engaged the attention of the E. Review. See Vol. xlv. page 190. Vol. xlv. page 225. Vol. xlv. page 515. Vol. xlvii. page 118. Vol. xlviii. page 258. Vol. xlix. page 150. Vol. l. page 181. Vol. li. page 526. In two recent numbers of the Review, the State of Education in the Public Schools of England has been very fully discussed. See Vol. li. page 65. and Vol. liii. page 64.

† Thoughts on the Advancement of Academical Education. London, 1826.—Vol. xliii. page 315. February, 1826.

We were startled at this. For surely no undertaking of equal importance was ever commenced in a manner more pacific and conciliatory. If the management has fallen, in a great measure, into the hands of persons whose political opinions are at variance with those of the dominant party, this was not the cause, but the effect of the jealousy which that party thought fit to entertain. Oxford and Cambridge, to all appearance, had nothing to dread. Hostilities were not declared. Even rivalry was disclaimed. The new Institution did not aspire to participate in the privileges which had been so long monopolized by those antient corporations. It asked for no franchises, no lands, no advowsons. It did not interfere with that mysterious scale of degrees on which good churchmen look with as much veneration as the Patriarch on the ladder up which he saw angels ascending. It did not ask permission to search houses without warrants, or to take books from publishers without paying for them. There was to be no melo-dramatic pageantry, no antient ceremonial, no silver mace, no gowns either black or red, no hoods either of fur or of satin, no public orator to make speeches which nobody hears, no oaths sworn only to be broken. Nobody thought of emulating the cloisters, the organs, the painted glass, the withered mummies, the busts of great men, and the pictures of naked women, which attract visitors from every part of the Island to the banks of Isis and Cam. The persons whose advantage was chiefly in view belonged to a class of which very few ever find their way to the old colleges. The name of University was indeed assumed; and it has been said that this gave offence. But we are confident that so ridiculous an objection can have been entertained by very few. It reminds us of the whimsical cruelty with which Mercury, in Plautus, knocks down poor Sosia for being so impudent as to have the same name with himself!

We know indeed that there are many to whom knowledge is hateful for its own sake,—owl-like beings, creatures of darkness, and rapine, and evil omen, who are sensible that their organs fit them only for the night,—and that, as soon as the day arises, they shall be pecked back to their nooks by those on whom they now prey with impunity. By the arts of those enemies of mankind, a large and influential party has been led to look with suspicion, if not with horror, on all schemes of education, and to doubt whether the ignorance of the people be not the best security for its virtue and repose.

We will not at present attack the principles of these persons, because we think that, even on those principles, they are bound to support the London University. If indeed it were possible to bring back, in all their antient loveliness, the times of venerable absurdities and good old nuisances—if we could hope that gentlemen might again put their marks to deeds without blushing—that it might again be thought a miracle if any body in a parish could read, except the Vicar, or if the Vicar were to read any thing but the Service,—that all the literature of the multitude might again be comprised in a ballad or a prayer,—that the Bishop of Norwich might be burned for a heretic, and Sir Humphry Davy hanged for a conjuror,—that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might negotiate loans with Mr. Rothschild, by extracting one of his teeth daily till he brought him to terms,—then indeed the case would be different. But, alas! who can venture to anticipate such a millennium of stupidity? The zealots of ignorance will therefore do well to consider, whether, since the evils of knowledge cannot be alto-

gether excluded, it may not be desirable to set them in array against each other. The best state of things, we will concede to them, would be that in which all men should be dunces together. That might be called the age of gold. The silver age would be that in which no man should be taught to spell, unless he could produce letters of ordination, or, like a candidate for a German order of knighthood, prove his sixty-four quarters. Next in the scale would stand a community in which the higher and middling orders should be well educated, and the labouring people utterly uninformed. But the iron age would be that in which the lower classes should be rising in intelligence, while no corresponding improvement was taking place in the rank immediately above them.

England is in the last of these states. From one end of the country to the other the artisans, the draymen, the very plough boys, are learning to read and write. Thousands of them attend lectures. Hundreds of thousands read newspapers. Whether this be a blessing or a curse, we are not now inquiring. But such is the fact. Education is spreading amongst the working people, and cannot be prevented from spreading amongst them. The change which has taken place in this respect within twenty years is prodigious. No person, surely, will venture to say that information has increased in the same degree amongst those who constitute what may be called the lower part of the middling class, — farmers for instance, shopkeepers, or clerks in commercial houses.

If there be any truth in the principles held by the enemies of education, this is the most dangerous state in which a country can be placed. They maintain that knowledge renders the poor arrogant and discontented. It will hardly be disputed, we presume, that arrogance is the result, not of the absolute situation in which a man may be placed, but of the relation in which he stands to others. Where a whole society is equably rising in intelligence, where the distance between its different orders remains the same, though every order advances, that feeling is not likely to be excited. An individual is no more vain of his knowledge, because he participates in the universal improvement, than he is vain of his speed, because he is flying along with the earth and every thing upon it at the rate of seventy thousand miles an hour. But if he feels that *he* is going forward, while those before him are standing still, the case is altered. If ever the diffusion of knowledge can be attended with the danger of which we hear so much, it is in England at the present moment. And this danger can be obviated in two ways only. Unteach the poor, — or teach those who may, by comparison, be called the rich. The former it is plainly impossible to do : and therefore, if those whom we are addressing be consistent, they will exert themselves to do the latter ; and, by increasing the knowledge, increase also the power of an extensive and important class, — a class which is as deeply interested as the peerage or the hierarchy in the prosperity and tranquillity of the country ; a class which, while it is too numerous to be corrupted by government, is too intelligent to be duped by demagogues, and which, though naturally hostile to oppression and profusion, is not likely to carry its zeal for reform to lengths inconsistent with the security of property and the maintenance of social order.

‘ But an University without religion !’ softly expostulates the Quarterly Review. — ‘ An University without religion !’ roars John Bull,

wedging in his pious horror between a slander and a double-entendre. And from pulpits and visitation-dinners and combination-rooms innumerable, the cry is echoed and re-echoed, 'An University without religion!'

This objection has really imposed on many excellent people, who have not adverted to the immense difference which exists between the new Institution and those foundations of which the members form a sort of family, living under the same roof, governed by the same regulations, compelled to eat at the same table, and to return to their apartments at the same hours. Have none of those who censure the London University on this account, daughters who are educated at home, and who are attended by different teachers? The music-master, a good Protestant, comes at twelve; the dancing-master, a French philosopher, at two; the Italian master, a believer in the blood of Saint Januarius, at three. The parents take upon themselves the office of instructing their child in religion. She hears the preachers whom they prefer, and reads the theological works which they put into her hands. Who can deny that this is the case in innumerable families? Who can point out any material difference between the situation in which this girl is placed, and that of a pupil at the new University? Why then is so crying an abuse suffered to exist without reprehension? Is there no Sacheverell to raise the old cry, — the Church is in danger, — that cry which was never uttered by any voice however feeble, or for any end however base, without being instantly caught up and repeated through all the dark and loathsome nooks where bigotry nestles with corruption? Where is the charge of the Bishop and the sermon of the Chaplain, the tear of the Chancellor and the oath of the Heir-apparent, the speech of Mr. William Bankes and the pamphlet of Sir Harcourt Lees? What means the silence of those filthy and malignant baboons, whose favourite diversion is to grin and sputter at innocence and beauty through the grates of their spunging-houses? Why not attempt to blast the reputation of the poor ladies who are so irreligiously brought up? Why not search into all the secrets of their families? Why not enliven the Sunday breakfast-tables of priests and placemen with the elopements of their great-aunts and the bankruptcies of their second cousins?

Or, to make the parallel still clearer, take the case of a young man, a student, we will suppose, of surgery, resident in London. He wishes to become master of his profession, without neglecting other useful branches of knowledge. In the morning he attends Mr. M'Culloch's lecture on Political Economy. He then repairs to the Hospital, and hears Sir Astley Cooper explain the mode of reducing fractures. In the afternoon he joins one of the Classes which Mr. Hamilton instructs in French or German. With regard to religious observances, he acts as he himself, or those under whose care he is, may think most advisable. Is there any thing objectionable in this? Is it not the most common case in the world? And in what does it differ from that of a young man at the London University? Our surgeon, it is true, will have to run over half London in search of his instructors; and the other will find all the lecture-rooms which he attends standing conveniently together, at the end of Gower Street. Is it in the local situation that the mischief lies? We have observed that, since Mr. Croker, in the last session of Parliament, declared himself ignorant of the site of Russell Square, the plan of forming an University

in so inelegant a neighbourhood has excited much contempt amongst those estimable persons who think that the whole dignity of man consists in living within certain districts, wearing coats made by certain tailors, and eschewing certain meats and drinks. We should be sorry to think that the reports which any lying Mandeville from Bond Street may have circulated respecting that Terra Incognita, could seriously prejudice the new College. The Secretary of the Admiralty, however, has the remedy in his own hands. When Captain Franklin returns, as we trust he soon will, from his American expedition, he will, we hope, be sent to explore that other North-West passage which connects the city with the Regent's Park. It would then be found, that, though the natives generally belong to the same race with those Oriental barbarians whose irruptions have long been the terror of Hamilton Place and Grosvenor Square, they are, upon the whole, quiet and inoffensive; that, though they possess no architectural monument which can be compared to the Pavilion at Brighton, their habitations are neat and commodious; and that their language has many roots in common with that which is spoken in St. James's Street. One thing more we must mention, which will astonish some of our readers, as much as the discovery of the Syrian Christians of St. Thomas on the coast of Malabar. Our religion has been introduced by some Xavier or Augustin of former times into these tracts. Churches, with all their appurtenances of hassocks and organs, are to be found there; and even the tithe, that great *articulum stantis aut labantis ecclesiæ*, is by no means unknown.

The writer of the article on this subject, in the last number of the Quarterly Review, severely censures the omission of religious instruction, in a place styling itself an University, — never perceiving that, with the inconsistency which belongs to error, he has already answered the objection. ‘A place of education,’ says he, ‘is the least of all proper to be made the arena of disputable and untried doctrine.’ He severely censures those academies in which ‘a perpetual vacillation of doctrine is observable, whether in morals, metaphysics, or religion,’ ‘according to the frequency of change in the professional chair.’ Now, we venture to say, that these considerations, if they are worth anything at all, are decisive against any scheme of religious instruction in the London University. That University was intended to admit, not only Christians of all persuasions, but even Jews. But suppose that it were to narrow its limits, to adopt the formularies of the Church of England, to require subscription, or the sacramental test, from every professor and from every pupil; still, we say, there would be more field for controversy, more danger of that vacillation of doctrine which seems to the Reviewer to be so great an evil, on subjects of theology, than on all other subjects together. Take a science which is still young, a science of considerable intricacy, a science, we may add, which the passions and interests of men have rendered more intricate than it is in its own nature, the science of Political economy. Who will deny, that, for one schism which is to be found among those who are engaged in that study, there are twenty on points of divinity, *within the Church of England?*

Is it not notorious, that Arminians, who stand on the very frontier of Pelagianism, and Calvinists, whom a line scarcely discernible separates from Antinomianism, are to be found among those who eat the bread of the Establishment? Is it not notorious that predestination, final per-

severance, the operation of grace, the efficacy of the sacraments, and a hundred other subjects which we could name, have been themes of violent disputes between eminent churchmen? The ethics of Christianity, as well as its theory, have been the theme of dispute. One party calls the other latitudinarian and worldly; the other retorts accusations of fanaticism and asceticism. The curate has been set against the rector, the dean against the bishop. There is scarcely a parish in England into which the controversy has not found its way. There is scarcely an action of human life so trivial and familiar as not to be in some way or other affected by it. Whether it is proper to take in a Sunday newspaper, to shoot a partridge, to course a hare, to subscribe to a Bible Society, to dance, to play at whist, to read Tom Jones, to see Othello,—all these are questions on which the strongest difference of opinion exists between persons of high eminence in the hierarchy. The Quarterly Reviewer thinks it a very bad thing, that ‘the first object of a new professor should be to refute the fundamental positions of his predecessors.’ What would be the case if a High Churchman should succeed a Low Churchman, or a Low Churchman a High Churchman, in the chair of religion? And what possible security could the London University have against such an event? What security have Oxford or Cambridge now? In fact, all that we know of the state of religious parties at those places fully bears out our statement. One of the most famous divines of our time, Dr. Marsh, Bishop of Peterborough, Margaret Professor of Theology at Cambridge, and author of eighty-seven of the most unanswerable questions that ever man propounded to his fellow men, published a very singular hypothesis respecting the origin of the Gospels. With the truth or falsehood of the hypothesis we have nothing to do. We have, however, heard another eminent professor of the same University, high in the Church, condemn the theory as utterly unfounded, and of most dangerous consequence to the orthodox faith. Nay, the very pulpit of St. Mary’s has been ‘the arena of disputable and untried doctrine,’ as much as ever was the chair of any Scotch or German professor,—a fact, of which any person may easily satisfy himself, who will take the trouble to rescue from the hands of trunk-makers and pastry-cooks a few of the sermons which have been preached there, and subsequently published. And if, in the course of his researches, he should happen to light on that which was preached by a very eminent scholar on a very remarkable occasion, the installation of the Duke of Gloucester, will see, that not only dispute, but something very like abuse, may take place between those whose office it is to instruct our young collegians in the doctrines and duties of Christianity.

‘But,’ it is said, ‘would it not be shocking to expose the morals of young men to the contaminating influence of a great city, to all the fascinations of the Fives’ Court and the gaming table, the tavern and the saloon?’ Shocking, indeed, we grant, if it were possible to send them all to Oxford and Cambridge, those blessed spots where, to use the imagery of their own prize-poems, the Saturnian age still lingers, and where white-robed Innocence has left the print of her departing footsteps. There, we know, all the men are philosophers, and all the women vestals. There, simple and bloodless repasts support the body without distressing the mind. There, while the sluggish world is still sleeping, the ingenuous youth hasten to pour forth their fervent orisons in the chapel; and in the evening, elsewhere the season of riot

and license, indulge themselves with a solitary walk beneath the venerable avenues, musing on the vanity of sensual pursuits, and the eternity and sublimity of virtue. But, alas ! these blissful abodes of the Seven Cardinal Virtues are neither large enough nor cheap enough for those who stand in need of instruction. Many thousands of young men will live in London, whether an University be established there or not, — and that for this simple reason, that they cannot afford to live elsewhere. That they should be condemned to one misfortune because they labour under another, and debarred from knowledge because they are surrounded with temptations to vice, seems to be not a very rational or humane mode of proceeding.

To speak seriously, in comparing the dangers to which the morals of young men are exposed in London, with those which exist at the Universities, there is something to be said on both sides. The temptations of London may be greater. But with the temptation there is a way to escape. If the student live with his family, he will be under the influence of restraints more powerful, and, we will add, infinitely more salutary and respectable, than those which the best disciplined colleges can impose. Even if he be left completely to his own devices, he will still have within his reach two inestimable advantages, from which the students of Oxford and Cambridge are almost wholly excluded, the society of men older than himself, and of modest women.

There are no intimacies more valuable than those which a young man forms with one who is his senior by ten or twelve years. Those years do not destroy the sympathy and the sense of equality without which no cordiality can exist. Yet they strengthen the principles, and form the judgment. They make one of the parties a sensible adviser, and the other a docile listener. Such friendships it is almost impossible to form at College. Between the man of twenty and the man of thirty there is a great gulf, a distinction which cannot be mistaken, which is marked by the dress and by the seat, at prayers and at table. We do not believe that, of the young students at our antient seats of learning, one in ten lives in confidence and familiarity with any member of the University who is a Master of Arts. When the members of the University are deducted, the society of Oxford and Cambridge is no more than that of an ordinary county town.

This state of things, it is clear, does more harm than all the exertions of Proctors and Proproctors can do good. The errors of young men are of a nature with which it is very difficult to deal. Slight punishments are inefficient ; severe punishments generally and justly odious. The best course is to give them over to the arm of public opinion. To restrain them, it is necessary to make them discreditable. But how can they be made discreditable while the offenders associate only with those who are of the same age, who are exposed to the same temptations, and who are willing to grant the indulgence which they themselves may need ? It is utterly impossible that a code of morality and honour, enacted by the young only, can be so severe against juvenile irregularities as that which is in force in general society, where manhood and age have the deciding voice, and where the partial inclinations of those whose passions are strong, and whose reason is weak, are withstood by those whom time and domestic life have sobered. The difference resembles that which would be found between laws passed by an assembly consisting solely of farmers, or solely of weavers, and those of a senate fairly representing every interest of the community.

A student in London, even though he may not live with his own relatives, will generally have it in his power to mix with respectable female society. This is not only a very pleasant thing, but it is one which, though it may not make him moral, is likely to make him decorous, and to preserve him from that brainless and heartless Yahooism, that disdain of the character of women, and that brutal indifference to their misery, which is the worst offence and the severest punishment of the finished libertine. Many of the pupils will, in all probability, continue to reside with their parents or friends. We own that we can conceive no situation more agreeable or more salutary. One of the worst effects of College habits is that distaste for domestic life which they almost inevitably generate. The system is monastic; and it tends to produce the monastic selfishness, inattention to the convenience of others, and impatience of petty privations. We mean no reproach. It is utterly impossible that the most amiable man in the world can be accustomed to live for years independent of his neighbours, and to lay all his plans with a view only to himself, without becoming, in some degree, unfitted for a family. A course of education, which should combine the enjoyments of a home with the excitements of a University, would be more likely than any other to form characters at once affectionate and manly. Home-bred boys, it is often said, are idle. The cause, we suspect, is the want of competitors. We no more believe that a young man at the London University would be made idle by the society of his mothers and sisters, than that the old German warriors, or the combatants in the tournaments of the middle ages, were made cowards by the presence of female spectators. On the contrary, we are convinced that his ambition would be at once animated and consecrated by daily intercourse with those who would be dearest to him, and most inclined to rejoice in his success.

The eulogists of the old Universities are fond of dwelling on the glorious associations connected with them. It has often been said that the young scholar is likely to catch a generous enthusiasm from looking upon spots ennobled by so many great names — that he can scarcely see the chair in which Bentley sat, the tree which Milton planted, the walls within which Wickliffe presided, the books illustrated by the autographs of famous men, the halls hung with their pictures, the chapels hallowed by their tombs, without aspiring to imitate those whom he admires. Far be it from us to speak with disrespect of such feelings. It is possible that the memorials of those who have asserted the freedom, and extended the empire of the mind, may produce a strong impression on a sensitive and ardent disposition. But these instances are rare. ‘*Coram Lepidis male vivitur.*’ Young academicians venture to get drunk within a few yards of the grave of Newton, and to commit solecisms, though the awful eye of Erasmus frowns upon them from the canvass. Some more homely sentiment, some more obvious association is necessary. For our part, when a young man is to be urged to persevering industry, and fortified against the seductions of pleasure, we would rather send him to the fireside of his own family than to the abodes of philosophers who died centuries ago,—and to those kind familiar faces which are always anxious in his anxiety, and joyful in his success, than to the portrait of any writer that ever wore cap and gown.

The cry against the London University has been swelled by the voices of many really conscientious persons. Many have joined in it

from the mere wanton love of mischief. But we believe that it has principally originated in the jealousy of those who are attached to Cambridge and Oxford, either by their interests, or by those feelings which men naturally entertain towards the place of their education, and which, when they do not interfere with schemes of public advantage, are entitled to respect. Many of these persons, we suspect, entertain a vague apprehension, scarcely avowed even to themselves, that some defects in the constitution of their favourite Academies will be rendered more glaring by the contrast which the system of this new College will exhibit.

That there are such defects, great and radical defects, in the structure of the two Universities, we are strongly inclined to believe: and the jealousy which many of their members have expressed of the new Institution greatly strengthens our opinion. What those defects appear to us to be, we shall attempt to state with frankness, but, at the same time, we trust, with candour.

We are sensible that we have undertaken a dangerous task. There is perhaps no subject on which more people have made up their minds without knowing why. Whenever this is the case, discussion ends in scurrility, the last resource of the disputant who cannot answer, and who will not submit. The scurrility of those who are scurrilous on all occasions, and against all opponents, by nature and by habit, by taste and by trade, can excite only the mirth or the pity of a well regulated mind. But we neither possess, nor affect to possess, that degree of philosophy which would render us indifferent to the pain and resentment of sincere and respectable persons, whose prejudices we are compelled to assail. It is not in the bitterness of party spirit, it is not in the wantonness of paradox and declamation, that we would put to hazard the good-will of learned and estimable men. Such a sacrifice must be powerful, and nothing but a sense of public duty would lead us to make it. We would earnestly entreat the admirers of the two Universities to reflect on the importance of this subject, the advantages of calm investigation, and the folly of trusting, in an age like the present, to mere dogmatism and invective. If the system which they love and venerate rest upon just principles, the examination which we propose to institute into the state of its foundations can only serve to prove their solidity. If they be unsound, we will not permit ourselves to think, that intelligent and honourable men can wish to disguise a fact which, for the sake of this country, and of the whole human race, ought to be widely known. Let them, instead of reiterating assertions which leave the question exactly where they found it; instead of turning away from all argument, as if the subject were one on which doubt partook of the nature of sin; instead of attributing to selfishness or malevolence that which may at worst be harmless error, join us in coolly studying so interesting and momentous a point.—As to this, however, they will please themselves. We speak to the English people. The public mind, if we are not deceived, is approaching to manhood. It has outgrown its swaddling bands, and thrown away its play-things. It can no longer be amused by a rattle, or laid asleep by a song, or awed by a fairy tale. At such a time, we cannot doubt that we shall obtain an impartial hearing.

Our objections to Oxford and Cambridge may be summed up in two words, their Wealth and their Privileges. Their prosperity does not depend on the public approbation. It would therefore be strange if

they deserved the public approbation. Their revenues are immense. Their degrees are, in some professions, indispensable. Like manufacturers who enjoy a monopoly, they work at such an advantage, that they can venture to work ill.

Every person, we presume, will acknowledge that, to establish an academic system on immutable principles, would be the height of absurdity. Every year sees the empire of science enlarged by the acquisition of some new province, or improved by the construction of some easier road. Surely the change which daily takes place in the state of knowledge ought to be accompanied by a corresponding change in the method of instruction. In many cases the rude and imperfect works of early speculators ought to give place to the more complete and luminous performances of those who succeed them. Even the comparative value of languages is subject to great fluctuations. The same tongue which at one period may be richer than any other in valuable works, may, some centuries after, be poorer than any. That, while such revolutions take place, education ought to remain unchanged, is a proposition too absurd to be maintained for a moment.

If it be desirable that education should, by a gradual and constant change, adapt itself to the circumstances of every generation, how is this object to be secured? We answer — only by perfect freedom of competition. Under such a system, every possible exigence would be met. Whatever language, whatever art, whatever science, it might at any time be useful to know, *that* men would surely learn, and would as surely find instructors to teach. The professor who should persist in devoting his attention to branches of knowledge which had become useless, would soon be deserted by his pupils. There would be as much of every sort of information as would afford profit and pleasure to the possessor — and no more.

But the riches and the franchises of our Universities prevent this salutary rivalry from taking place. In its stead is introduced an unnatural system of premiums, prohibitions, and apprenticeships. Enormous bounties are lavished on particular acquirements; and in consequence, there is among our youth a glut of Greek, Latin, and Mathematics, and a lamentable scarcity of every thing else.

We are by no means inclined to depreciate the studies which are encouraged at Oxford and Cambridge. We should reprobate with the same severity a system under which a like exclusive protection should be extended to French or Spanish, Chemistry or Mineralogy, Metaphysics or Political Economy. Some of these branches of knowledge are very important. But they may not always be equally important. Five hundred years hence, the Burmese language may contain the most valuable books in the world. Sciences, for which there is now no name, and of which the first rudiments are still undiscovered, may then be in the greatest demand. Our objection is to the principle. We abhor intellectual perpetuities. A chartered and endowed College, strong in its wealth and in its degrees, does not find it necessary to teach what is useful, because it can pay men to learn what is useless. Every fashion which was in vogue at the time of its foundation enters into its constitution and partakes of its immortality. Its abuses savour of the realty, and its prejudices vest in mortmain, with its lands. In the present instance the consequences are notorious. We every day see clever men of four and five-and-twenty, loaded with academical honours and

rewards,—scholarships, fellowships, whole cabinets of medals, whole shelves of prize books,—enter into life with their education still to begin, unacquainted with the history, the literature, we might almost say, the language of their country, unacquainted with the first principles of the laws under which they live, unacquainted with the very rudiments of moral and political science! Who will deny that this is the state of things? Or who will venture to defend it?

This is no new complaint. Long before society had so far outstripped the Colleges in the career of improvement as it has since done, the evil was noticed and traced to its true cause by that great philosopher who most accurately mapped all the regions of science, and furnished the human intellect with its most complete Itinerary: ‘It is not to be forgotten,’ says Lord Bacon, ‘that the dedicating of foundations and donations to professorial learning, hath not only had a malign influence upon the growth of sciences, but hath also been prejudicial to states and governments: for hence it proceedeth, that princes find a solitude in respect of able men to serve them in causes of state, *because there is no education collegiate which is FREE*, where such as were so disposed might give themselves to histories, modern languages, books of policy and civil discourse, and other like enablements unto causes of state.’* The warmest admirers of the present system will hardly deny, that, if this was an evil in the sixteenth century, it must be a much greater evil in the nineteenth. The literature of Greece and Rome is now what it was then. That of every modern language has received considerable accessions. And surely, ‘books of policy and civil discourse’ are as important to an English gentleman of the present day as they could be to a subject of James the First.

We repeat, that we are not disparaging either the dead languages or the exact sciences. We only say, that if they are useful they will not need peculiar encouragement, and that, if they are useless, they ought not to receive it. Those who maintain that the present system is necessary to promote the study of classical and mathematical knowledge, are the persons who really depreciate those pursuits. They do in fact declare, by implication, that neither amusement nor profit is to be derived from them, and that no man has any motive to employ his time upon them, unless he expects that they may help him to a fellowship.

The utility of mathematical knowledge is felt in every part of the system of life, and acknowledged by every rational man. But does it therefore follow, that people ought to be paid to acquire it. A scarcity of persons capable of making almanacks and measuring land is as little to be apprehended as a scarcity of blacksmiths. In fact, very few of our academical mathematicians turn their knowledge to such practical purposes. There are many wranglers who have never touched a quadrant. What peculiar title then has the mere speculative knowledge of mathematical truth to such costly remuneration? The answer is well known. It makes men good reasoners: it habituates them to strict accuracy in drawing inferences. In this statement there is unquestionably some truth. A man who understands the nature of mathematical reasoning, the closest of all kinds of reasoning, is likely to reason better than another on points not mathematical, as a man who can dance generally walks better than a man who cannot. But no people walk so ill as dancing masters; and no people reason so ill as mere mathema-

* Advancement of Learning, book ii.

ticians. They are accustomed to look only for one species of evidence; a species of evidence of which the transactions of life do not admit. When they come from certainties to probabilities, from a syllogism to a witness, their superiority is at an end. They resemble a man who, never having seen any object which was not either black or white, should be required to discriminate between two near shades of grey. Hence, on questions of religion, policy, or common life, we perpetually see these boasted demonstrators either extravagantly credulous or extravagantly sceptical. That the science is a necessary ingredient in a liberal education, we admit. But it is only an ingredient, and an ingredient which is peculiarly dangerous, unless diluted by a large admixture of others. To encourage it by such rewards as are bestowed at Cambridge is to make the occasional tonic of the mind its morning and evening nutriment.

The partisans of classical literature are both more numerous and more enthusiastic than the mathematicians; and the ignorant violence with which their cause has sometimes been assailed, has added to its popularity. On this subject we are sure that we are at least impartial judges. We feel the warmest admiration for the great remains of antiquity. We gratefully acknowledge the benefits which mankind has owed to them. But we would no more suffer a pernicious system to be protected by the reverence which is due to them, than we would show our reverence for a saint by erecting his shrine into a sanctuary for criminals.

An eloquent scholar has said, that antient literature was the ark in which all the civilization of the world was preserved during the deluge of barbarism. We confess it: but we do not read that Noah thought himself bound to live in the ark after the deluge had subsided. When our ancestors first began to consider the study of the classics as the principal part of education, little or nothing worth reading was to be found in any modern language. Circumstances have confessedly changed. Is it not possible that a change of system may be desirable?

Our opinion of the Latin tongue will, we fear, be considered heretical. We cannot but think that its vocabulary is miserably poor, and its mechanism deficient both in power and precision. The want of a definite article, and of a distinction between the preterite and the aorist tenses, are two defects which are alone sufficient to place it below any other language with which we are acquainted. In its most flourishing era it was reproached with poverty of expression. Cicero, indeed, was induced, by his patriotic feelings, to deny the charge. But the perpetual recurrence of Greek words in his most hurried and familiar letters, and the frequent use which he is compelled to make of them, in spite of all his exertions to avoid them, in his philosophical works, fully prove that even this great master of the Latin tongue felt the evil which he laboured to conceal from others.

We do not think much better of the writers, as a body, than of the language. The literature of Rome was born old. All the signs of decrepitude were on it in the cradle. We look in vain for the sweet lisp and the graceful wildness of an infant dialect. We look in vain for a single great creative mind,—for a Homer or a Dante, a Shakespeare or a Cervantes. In their place we have a crowd of fourth-rate and fifth-rate authors, translators, and imitators without end. The rich heritage of Grecian philosophy and poetry was fatal to the Romans. They would have acquired more wealth, if they had succeeded to less. Instead of

accumulating fresh intellectual treasures, they contented themselves with enjoying, disposing in new forms, or impairing by an injudicious management, those which they took by descent. Hence, in most of their works, there is scarcely any thing spontaneous and racy, scarcely any originality in the thoughts, scarcely any idiom in the style. Their poetry tastes of the hot-house. It is transplanted from Greece, with the earth of Pindus clinging round its roots. It is nursed in careful seclusion from the Italian air. The gardeners are often skilful; but the fruit is almost always sickly. One hardy and prickly shrub, of genuine Latin growth, must indeed be excepted. Satire was the only indigenous produce of Roman talent; and, in our judgment, by far the best.

We are often told the Latin language is more strictly grammatical than the English; and that it is, therefore, necessary to study it in order to speak English with elegance and accuracy. This is one of those remarks, which are repeated till they pass into axioms, only because they have so little meaning, that nobody thinks it worth while to refute them at their first appearance. If those who say that the Latin language is more strictly grammatical than the English mean only that it is more regular, that there are fewer exceptions to its general laws of derivation, inflection, and construction, we grant it. This is, at least for the purposes of the orator and the poet, rather a defect than a merit; but be it merit or defect, it can in no possible way facilitate the acquisition of any other language. It would be about as reasonable to say, that the simplicity of the Code Napoleon renders the study of the laws of England easier than formerly. If it be meant, that the Latin language is formed in more strict accordance with the general principles of grammar than the English, that is to say, that the relations which words bear to each other are more strictly analogous to the relations between the ideas which they represent in Latin than in English, we venture to doubt the fact. We are quite sure, that not one in ten thousand of those who repeat the hackneyed remark on which we are commenting, have ever considered whether there be any principles of grammar whatever, anterior to positive enactment,—any solecism which is a *malum in se*, as distinct from a *malum prohibitum*. Or, if we suppose that there exist such principles, is not the circumstance, that a particular rule is found in one language and not in another, a sufficient proof that it is not one of those principles? That a man who knows Latin is likely to know English better than one who does not, we do not dispute. But this advantage is not peculiar to the study of Latin. Every language throws light on every other. There is not a single foreign tongue which will not suggest to a man of sense some new considerations respecting his own. We acknowledge, too, that the great body of our educated countrymen learn to grammaticise their English by means of their Latin. This, however, proves, not the usefulness of their Latin, but the folly of their other instructors. Instead of being a vindication of the present system of education, it is a high charge against it. A man who thinks the knowledge of Latin essential to the purity of English diction, either has never conversed with an accomplished woman, or does not deserve to have conversed with her. We are sure, that all persons who are in the habit of hearing public speaking must have observed, that the orators who are fondest of quoting Latin are by no means the most scrupulous about marring their native tongue. We could mention several Members of

Parliament, who never fail to usher in their scraps of Horace and Juvenal with half a dozen false concords.

The Latin language is principally valuable as an introduction to the Greek, the insignificant portico of a most chaste and majestic fabric. On this subject, our Confession of Faith will, we trust, be approved by the most orthodox scholar. We cannot refuse our admiration to that most wonderful and perfect machine of human thought, to the flexibility, the harmony, the gigantic power, the exquisite delicacy, the infinite wealth of words, the incomparable felicity of expression, in which are united the energy of the English, the neatness of the French, the sweet and infantine simplicity of the Tuscan. Of all dialects, it is the best fitted for the purposes both of science and of elegant literature. The philosophical vocabularies of antient Rome, and of modern Europe, have been derived from that of Athens. Yet none of the imitations has ever approached the richness and precision of the original. It traces with ease distinctions so subtle, as to be lost in every other language. It draws lines where all the other instruments of the reason only make blots. Nor is it less distinguished by the facilities which it affords to the poet. There are pages even in the Greek Dictionaries over which it is impossible to glance without delight. Every word suggests some pleasant or striking image, which, wholly unconnected as it is with that which precedes or that which follows, gives the same sort of pleasure with that which we derive from reading the *Adonais* of poor Shelley, or from looking at those elegant though unmeaning friezes, in which the eye wanders along a line of beautiful faces, graceful draperies, stags, chariots, altars, and garlands. The literature is not unworthy of the language. It may boast of four poets of the very first order, Homer, *Æschylus*, Sophocles, and Aristophanes,—of Demosthenes, the greatest of orators — of Aristotle, who is perhaps entitled to the same rank among philosophers, and of Plato, who, if not the most satisfactory of philosophers, is at least the most fascinating. These are the great names of Greece; and to these is to be added a long list of ingenious moralists, wits, and rhetoricians, of poets who, in the lower departments of their art, deserve the greatest praise, and of historians who, at least in the talent of narration, have never been equalled.

It was justly said by the Emperor Charles the Fifth, that to learn a new language was to acquire a new soul. He who is acquainted only with the writers of his native tongue is in perpetual danger of confounding what is accidental with what is essential, and of supposing that tastes and habits of thought, which belong only to his own age and country, are inseparable from the nature of man. Initiated into foreign literature, he finds that principles of politics and morals, directly contrary to those which he has hitherto supposed to be unquestionable, because he never heard them questioned, have been held by large and enlightened communities; that feelings, which are so universal among his contemporaries, that he had supposed them instinctive, have been unknown to whole generations; that images, which have never failed to excite the ridicule of those among whom he has lived, have been thought sublime by millions. He thus loses that Chinese cast of mind, that stupid contempt for every thing beyond the wall of his celestial empire, which was the effect of his former ignorance. New associations take place among his ideas. He doubts where he formerly dogmatised. He tolerates where he formerly execrated. He ceases to confound

that which is universal and eternal in human passions and opinions with that which is local and temporary. This is one of the most useful effects which result from studying the literature of other countries ; and it is one which the remains of Greece, composed at a remote period, and in a state of society widely different from our own, are peculiarly calculated to produce.

But though we are sensible that great advantages may be derived from the study of the Greek language, we think that they may be purchased at too high a price : and we think that seven or eight years of the life of a man who is to enter into active life at two or three and twenty, is too high a price. Those are bad economists who look only to the excellence of the article for which they are bargaining, and never ask about the cost. The cost, in the present instance, is too often the whole of that invaluable portion of time during which a fund of intellectual pleasure is to be stored up, and the foundations of wisdom and usefulness laid. No person doubts that much knowledge may be obtained from the Classics. It is equally certain that much gold may be found in Spain. But it by no means necessarily follows, that it is wise to work the Spanish mines, or to learn the antient languages. Before the voyage of Columbus, Spain supplied all Europe with the precious metals. The discovery of America changed the state of things. New mines were found, from which gold could be procured in greater plenty and with less labour. The old works were therefore abandoned — it being manifest, those who persisted in laying out capital on them would be undersold and ruined. A new world of literature and science has also been discovered. New veins of intellectual wealth have been laid open. But a monstrous system of bounties and prohibitions compels us still to go on delving for a few glittering grains in the dark and laborious shaft of antiquity, instead of penetrating a district which would reward a less painful search with a more lucrative return. If, after the conquest of Peru, Spain had enacted that, in order to enable the old mines to maintain a competition against the new, a hundred pistoles should be given to every person who should extract an ounce of gold from them, the parallel would be complete.

We will admit that the Greek language is a more valuable language than the French, the Italian, or the Spanish. But whether it be more valuable than all the three together may be doubted ; and that all the three may be acquired in less than half the time in which it is possible to become thoroughly acquainted with the Greek admits of no doubt at all. Nor does the evil end here. Not only do the modern dialects of the Continent receive less attention than they deserve, but our own tongue, second to that of Greece alone in force and copiousness, our own literature, second to none that ever existed, so rich in poetry, in eloquence, in philosophy, is unpardonably neglected. All the nineteen plays of Euripides are digested, from the first bubbling froth of the Hecuba to the last vapid dregs of the Electra ; while our own sweet Fletcher, the second name of the modern drama, in spite of all the brilliancy of his wit, and all the luxury of his tenderness, is suffered to lie neglected. The Essay on the Human Understanding is abandoned for the Theætetus and the Phædon. We have known the dates of all the petty skirmishes of the Peloponnesian war carefully transcribed and committed to memory by a man who thought that Hyde and Clarendon were two different persons ! That such a man has paid a dear price for his learning will be admitted. But, it may be said, he has at least something to show for it. Unhappily he has

sacrificed, in order to acquire it, the very things without which it was impossible for him to use it. He has acted like a man living in a small lodging, who, instead of spending his money in enlarging his apartments and fitting them up commodiously, should lay it all out on furniture fit only for Chatsworth or Belvoir. His little rooms are blocked up with bales of rich stuffs and heaps of gilded ornaments, which have cost more than he can afford, yet which he has no opportunity and no room to display. Elegant and precious in themselves, they are here utterly out of place ; and their possessor finds that, at a ruinous expense, he has bought nothing but inconvenience and ridicule. Who has not seen men to whom antient learning is an absolute curse, who have laboured only to accumulate what they cannot enjoy ? They come forth into the world, expecting to find only a larger university. They find that they are surrounded by people who have not the least respect for the skill with which they detect etymologies, and twist corrupt Epodes into something like meaning. Classical knowledge is indeed valued by all intelligent men ; but not such classical knowledge as theirs. To be prized by the public, it must be refined from its grosser particles, burnished into splendour, formed into graceful ornaments or into current coin. Learning in the ore, learning with all the dross around it, is nothing to the common spectator. He prefers the cheapest tinsel, and leaves the rare and valuable clod to the few who have the skill to detect its qualities, and the curiosity to prize them.

No man, we allow, can be said to have received a complete and liberal education unless he have acquired a knowledge of the antient languages. But not one gentleman in fifty can possibly receive what we should call a complete and liberal education. That term includes, not only the antient languages, but those of France, Italy, Germany, and Spain. It includes mathematics, the experimental sciences, and moral philosophy. An intimate acquaintance both with the profound and polite parts of English literature is indispensable. Few of those who are intended for professional or commercial life can find time for all these studies. It necessarily follows, that some portion of them must be given up : and the question is, what portion ? We say, provide for the mind as you provide for the body,—first necessities,—then conveniences,—lastly luxuries. Under which of those heads do the Greek and Latin languages come ? Surely under the last. Of all the pursuits which we have mentioned, they require the greatest sacrifice of time. He who can afford time for them, and for the others also, is perfectly right in acquiring them. He who cannot, will, if he is wise, be content to go without them. If a man is able to continue his studies till his twenty-eighth or thirtieth year, by all means let him learn Latin and Greek. If he must terminate them at one and twenty, we should in general advise him to be satisfied with the modern languages. If he is forced to enter into active life at fifteen or sixteen, we should think it best that he should confine himself almost entirely to his native tongue, and thoroughly imbue his mind with the spirit of its best writers. But no ! The artificial restraints and encouragements which our academic system has introduced have altogether *reversed* this natural and salutary order of things. We deny ourselves what is indispensable, that we may procure what is superfluous. We act like a day-labourer who should stint himself in bread, that he might now and then treat himself with a pottle of January strawberries. Cicero tells us, in the Offices, a whimsical anecdote of Cato the Censor. Somebody asked him what was the best mode of employing capital. He said, To farm good pasture land.

What the next? To farm middling pasture land. What next? To farm bad pasture land. Now the notions which prevail in England respecting classical learning seem to us very much to resemble those which the old Roman entertained with regard to his favourite method of cultivation. Is a young man able to spare the time necessary for passing through the University? Make him a good classical scholar! But a second, instead of residing at the University, must go into business when he leaves school. Make him then a tolerable classical scholar! A third has still less time for snatching up knowledge, and is destined for active employment while still a boy. Make him a bad classical scholar! If he does not become a Flaminus or a Buchanan, he may learn to write nonsense verses. If he does not get on to Horace, he may read the first book of Cæsar. If there is not time even for such a degree of improvement, he may at least be flogged through that immemorial vestibule of learning, ‘*Quis docet? Who teacheth? Magister docet. The master teacheth.*’ Would to Heaven that he taught something better worth knowing.

All these evils are produced by the state of our Universities. Where they lead, those who prepare pupils for them, are forced to follow. Under a free system, the antient languages would be less read, but quite as much enjoyed. We should not see so many lads who have a smattering of Latin and Greek, from which they derive no pleasure, and which, as soon as they are at liberty, they make all possible haste to forget. It must be owned, also, that there would be fewer young men really well acquainted with the antient tongues. But there would be many more who had treasured up useful and agreeable information. Those who were compelled to bring their studies to an early close, would turn their attention to objects easily attainable. Those who enjoyed a longer space of literary leisure would still exert themselves to acquire the classical languages. They would study them, not for any direct emolument which they would expect from the acquisition, but for their own intrinsic value. Their number would be smaller, no doubt, than that of present aspirants after classical honours. But they would not, like most of those aspirants, leave Homer and Demosthenes to gather dust on the shelves as soon as the temporary purpose had been served. There would be fewer good scholars of twenty-five; but we believe that there would be quite as many of fifty.

Hitherto we have argued on the hypothesis most favourable to the Universities. We have supposed that the bounties which they offer to certain studies are fairly bestowed on those who excel. The fact however is, that they are in many cases appropriated to particular counties, parishes, or names. The effect of the former system is to encourage studies of secondary importance, at the expense of those which are entitled to preference. The effect of the latter is to encourage total idleness. It has been also asserted, that at some Colleges the distributors of fellowships and scholarships have allowed themselves to be influenced by party spirit or personal animosity. On this point, however, we will not insist. We wish to expose the vices, not of individuals, but of the system. Indeed, in what we have hitherto written, we have generally had in our eye a College which exhibits that system in the most favourable light,—a College in which the evils which we have noticed are as much as possible alleviated by an enlightened and liberal administration,—a College not less distinguished by its opulence and splendour than by the eminent talents of many of its members, by the

freedom and impartiality of its elections, by the disposition which it has always shown to adopt improvements not inconsistent with its original constitution, and by the noble spirit with which it has supported the cause of civil and religious liberty.

We have hitherto reasoned as if all the students at our Universities learnt those things which the Universities profess to teach. But this is, notoriously, not the fact — and the cause is evident. All who wish for degrees must reside at College; but only those who expect to obtain prizes and fellowships apply themselves with vigour to classical and mathematical pursuits. The great majority have no inducement whatever to exert themselves. They have no hope of obtaining the premium; and no value for the knowledge without the premium. For the acquisition of other kinds of knowledge the Universities afford no peculiar facilities. Hence proceeds the general idleness of collegians. Not one in ten, we venture say, ever makes any considerable proficiency in those pursuits to which every thing else is sacrificed. A very large proportion carry away from the University less of antient literature than they brought thither. It is quite absurd to attribute such a state of things to the indolence and levity of youth. Nothing like it is seen elsewhere. There are idle lads, no doubt, among those who walk the hospitals, who sit at the desks of bankers, and serve at the counters of tradesmen. But what, after all, is the degree of *their* idleness, and what proportion do they bear to those who are active? Is it not the most common thing in the world to see men, who have passed their time at College in mere trifling, display the greatest energy as soon as they enter on the business of life, and become profound lawyers, skilful physicians, eminent writers? How can these things be explained, but by supposing that most of those who are compelled to reside at the Universities have no motive to learn what is taught there? Who ever employed a French master for four years without improving himself in French? The reason is plain. No man employs such a master, but from a wish to become acquainted with the language; and the same wish leads him to apply vigorously to it. Of those who go to our Universities, on the other hand, a large proportion are attracted, not by their desire to learn the things studied there, but by their wish to acquire certain privileges, which residence confers alike on the idle and on the diligent. Try the same experiment with the French language. Erect the teachers of it into a corporation. Give them the power of conferring degrees. Enact that no person who cannot produce a certificate, attesting that he has been for a certain number of years a student at this academy, shall be suffered to keep a shop; and we will venture to predict, that there will soon be thousands, who, after having wasted their money and their time in a formal attendance on lectures and examinations, will not understand the meaning of *Parlez-vous Français?*

It is the general course of those who patronize an abuse to attribute to it every thing good which exists in spite of it. Thus, the defenders of our Universities commonly take it for granted, that we are indebted to them for all the talent which they have not been able to destroy. It is usual, when their merits come under discussion, to enumerate very pompously all the great men whom they have produced; as if great men had not appeared under every system of education. Great men were trained in the schools of the Greek sophists and Arabian astrologers, of the Jesuits and the Jansenists. There were great men when nothing was taught but School Divinity and Canon Law; and there

would still be great men if nothing were taught but the fooleries of Spurzheim and Swedenberg. A long list of eminent names is no more a proof of the excellence of our Academic institutions, than the commercial prosperity of the country is a proof of the utility of restrictions in trade. No financial regulations, however absurd and pernicious, can prevent a people amongst whom property is secure, and the motive to accumulate consequently strong, from becoming rich. The energy with which every individual struggles to advance, more than counteracts the retarding force, and carries him forward, though at a slower rate than if he were left at liberty. It is the same with restrictions which prevent the intellect from taking the direction which existing circumstances point out. They do harm ; but they cannot wholly prevent other causes from producing good. In a country in which public opinion is powerful, in which talents properly directed are sure to raise their possessor to distinction, ardent and aspiring minds will surmount all the obstacles which may oppose their career. It is amongst persons who are engaged in public and professional life that genius is most likely to be developed. Of these a large portion is necessarily sent to our English Universities. It would, therefore, be wonderful if the Universities could not boast of many considerable men. Yet, after all, we are not sure whether, if we were to pass in review the Houses of Parliament, and the English and Scottish Bar, the result of the investigation would be so favourable as is commonly supposed to Oxford and Cambridge. And of this we are sure, that many persons who, since they have risen to eminence, are perpetually cited as proofs of the beneficial tendency of English education, were at College never mentioned but as idle frivolous men, fond of desultory reading, and negligent of the studies of the place. It would be indelicate to name the living ; but we may venture to speak more particularly of the dead. It is truly curious to observe the use which is made in such discussions as these, of names which we acknowledge to be glorious, but in which the Colleges have no reason to glory, — that of Bacon, who reprobated their fundamental constitution ; of Dryden, who abjured his *Alma Mater*, and regretted that he had passed his youth under her care ; of Locke, who was censured and expelled ; of Milton, whose person was outraged at one University, and whose works were committed to the flames at the other !

That in particular cases an University education may have produced good effects, we do not dispute. But as to the great body of those who receive it, we have no hesitation in saying, that their minds permanently suffer from it. All the time which they can devote to the acquisition of speculative knowledge is wasted, and they have to enter into active life without it. They are compelled to plunge into the details of business, and are left to pick up general principles as they may. From all that we have seen and heard, we are inclined to suspect, in spite of all our patriotic prejudices, that the young men, we mean the very young men, of England, are not equal as a body to those of France, Germany, or Russia. They reason less justly, and the subjects with which they are chiefly conversant are less manly. As they grow older, they doubtless improve. Surrounded by a free people, enlightened by a free press, with the means of knowledge placed within their reach, and the rewards of exertion sparkling in their sight, it would indeed be strange if they did not in a great measure recover the superiority which they had lost. The finished men of England may, we allow, challenge a comparison

with those of any nation. Yet our advantages are not so great that we can afford to sacrifice any of them. We do not proceed so rapidly, that we can prudently imitate the example of Lightfoot in the Nursery Tale, who never ran a race without tying his legs. The bad effects of our University system may be traced to the very last, in many eminent and respectable men. They have acquired great skill in business, they have laid up great stores of information. But something is still wanting. The superstructure is vast and splendid; but the foundations are unsound. It is evident that their knowledge is not systematized; that, however well they may argue on particular points, they have not that amplitude and intrepidity of intellect which it is the first object of education to produce. They hate abstract reasoning. The very name of theory is terrible to them. They seem to think that the use of experience is not to lead men to the knowledge of general principles, but to prevent them from ever thinking about general principles at all. They may play at bo-peep with truth; but they never get a full view of it in all its proportions. The cause we believe is, that they have passed those years during which the mind frequently acquires the character which it ever after retains, in studies, which, when exclusively pursued, have no tendency to strengthen or expand it.

From these radical defects of the old foundations the London University is free. It cannot cry up one study or cry down another. It has no means of bribing one man to learn what it is of no use to him to know, or of exacting a mock attendance from another who learns nothing at all. To be prosperous, it must be useful.

We would not be too sanguine. But there are signs of these times, and principles of human nature, to which we trust as firmly as ever any antient astrologer trusted to the rules of his science. Judging from these, we will venture to cast the horoscope of the infant Institution. We predict, that the clamour by which it has been assailed will die away, — that it is destined to a long, a glorious, and a beneficent existence, — that, while the spirit of its system remains unchanged, the details will vary with the varying necessities and facilities of every age, — that it will be the model of many future establishments — that even those haughty foundations which now treat it with contempt will in some degree feel its salutary influence, — and that the approbation of a great people, to whose wisdom, energy, and virtue its exertions will have largely contributed, will confer on it a dignity more imposing than any which it could derive from the most lucrative patronage, or the most splendid ceremonial.

Even those who think our hopes extravagant must own that no positive harm has been even suggested as likely to result from this Institution. All the imputed sins of its founders are sins of omission. Whatever may be thought of them, it is surely better that something should be omitted than that nothing should be done. The Universities it can injure in one way only — by surpassing them. This danger no sincere admirer of these bodies can apprehend. As for those who, believing that the project really tends to the good of the country, continue to throw obloquy upon it — and that there are such men we believe — to them we have nothing to say. We have no hope of converting them; no wish to revile them. Let them quibble, declaim, sneer, calumniate. Their punishment is to be what they are.

For us, our part has been deliberately chosen — and shall be manfully sustained. We entertain a firm conviction that the principles of liberty,

as in government and trade, so also in education, are all-important to the happiness of mankind. To the triumph of those principles we look forward, not, we trust, with a fanatical confidence, but assuredly with a cheerful and steadfast hope. Their nature may be misunderstood. Their progress may be retarded. They may be maligned, derided, nay at times exploded, and apparently forgotten. But we do, in our souls, believe that they are strong with the strength, and quick with the vitality of truth; that when they fall, it is to rebound; that when they recede, it is to spring forward with greater elasticity; that when they seem to perish, there are the seeds of renovation in their very decay — and that their influence will continue to bless distant generations, when infamy itself shall have ceased to rescue from oblivion the arts and the names of those who have opposed them, the dupe, the dissembler, the bigot, the hireling — the buffoon and the sarcasm, the liar and the lie! *

UNIVERSITIES OF ENGLAND — OXFORD.†

THIS is the age of reform: Next in importance to our religious and political establishments, are the foundations for public education; and having now seriously engaged in a reform of 'the constitution, the 'envy of surrounding nations,' the time cannot be distant for a reform in the schools and universities which have hardly avoided their contempt. Public intelligence is not, as hitherto, tolerant of prescriptive abuses, and the country now demands that endowments for the common weal should no longer be administered for private advantage. At this auspicious crisis, and under a ministry no longer warring against general opinion, we should be sorry not to contribute our endeavour to attract attention to the defects which more or less pervade all our national seminaries of education, and to the means best calculated for their removal. We propose, therefore, from time to time, to continue to review the state of these establishments, considered both absolutely in themselves, and in relation to the other circumstances which have contributed to modify the intellectual condition of the different divisions of the empire.

* When the London University was projected, it is well known that its objects were misrepresented, its utility questioned, and the motives of its founders scandalously maligned, by a party who have invariably regarded with hatred and suspicion the establishment of popular Institutions for the diffusion of knowledge. Among the most zealous and efficient advocates of that noble seminary may be ranked the conductors of the *Edinburgh Review*, who came boldly forward, when their support was much required, to repel the calumnious assertions of its enemies, and to defend the principles of a great national scheme for the improvement of the people. There is an excellent article on the subject in Vol. xlii. page 346; and one on the King's College, written in a candid and conciliatory spirit, in Vol. xlviii. page 235.

† 1. *Addenda ad Corpus Statutorum Universitatis Oxoniensis*. 4to. Oxonii: 1825.

2. *The Oxford University Calendar*, for 1829. 8vo. Oxford: 1829.—Vol. liii. p. 384. June, 1831.

In proceeding to the Universities, we commence with Oxford. This University is entitled to precedence, from its venerable antiquity, its antient fame, the wealth of its endowments, and the importance of its privileges : but there is another reason for our preference.

Without attempting any idle and invidious comparison,—without asserting the superior or inferior excellence of Oxford in contrast with any other British University, we have no hesitation in affirming, that comparing what it actually is with what it possibly could be, Oxford is, of all academical institutions, at once the most imperfect and the most perfectible. Properly directed, as they might be, the means which it possesses would render it the most efficient University in existence ; improperly directed, as they are, each part of the apparatus only counteracts another ; and there is not a similar institution which, in proportion to what it ought to accomplish, accomplishes so little. But it is not in demonstrating the imperfection of the present system, that we principally ground a hope of its improvement ; it is in demonstrating its *illegality*. In the reform of an antient establishment like Oxford, the great difficulty is to initiate a movement. In comparing Oxford as it is, with an ideal standard, there may be differences of opinion in regard to the kind of change expedient, if not in regard to the expediency of a change at all ; but in comparing it with the standard of its own code of statutes, there can be none. It will not surely be contended that matters should continue as they are, if it can be shown that, as now administered, this University pretends only to accomplish a petty fraction of the ends proposed to it by law, and attempts even this only by illegal means. But a progress being determined towards a state of right, it is easy to accelerate the momentum towards a state of excellence :—*ἀρχὴ ἡμῶν παντός*.

Did the limits of a single paper allow us to exhaust the subject, we should, in the *first* place, consider the state of the University, both as established in law, but non-existent in fact, and as established in fact, but non-existent in law ; in the *second*, the causes which determined the transition from the statutory to the illegal constitution ; in the *third*, the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems ; and, in the *fourth*, the means by which the University may be best restored to its efficiency. In the present article, we can, however, only compass—and that inadequately—the first and second heads. The third and fourth we must reserve for a separate discussion, in which we shall endeavour to demonstrate, that the intrusive system, compared with the legitimate, is as absurd as it is unauthorized,—that the preliminary step in a reform must be a return to the Statutory Constitution,—and that this constitution, though far from faultless, may, by a few natural and easy changes, be improved into an instrument of academical education, the most perfect perhaps in the world. The subject of our consideration at present requires a fuller exposition, not only from its intrinsic importance, but because, strange as it may appear, the origin, and consequently the cure, of the corruption of the English Universities, is totally misunderstood. The vices of the present system have been observed, and frequently discussed ; but as it has never been shown in what manner these vices were generated, so it has never been perceived how easily their removal might be enforced. It is generally believed that, however imperfect in itself, the actual mechanism of education organized in these seminaries is a time-honoured and essential part of their being, established upon statute, endowed by the national legislature

with exclusive privileges, and inviolable as a vested right. We shall prove, on the contrary, that it is new as it is inexpedient — not only accidental to the University, but radically subversive of its constitution, — without legal sanction, nay, in violation of positive law, — arrogating the privileges exclusively conceded to another system, which it has superseded, — and so far from being defensible by those it profits, as a right, that it is a flagrant usurpation obtained through perjury, and only tolerated from neglect.

I. Oxford and Cambridge, as establishments for education, consist of two parts — of the *University proper*, and of the *Colleges*. The former, original and essential, is founded, controlled, and privileged by public authority, for the advantage of the state. The latter, accessory and contingent, are created, regulated, and endowed by private munificence, for the interest of certain favoured individuals. Time was when the Colleges did not exist, and the University was there ; and were the Colleges again abolished, the University would remain entire. The former, founded solely for education, exists only as it accomplishes the end of its institution : the latter, founded principally for aliment and habitation, would still exist were all education abandoned within their walls. The University, as a national establishment, is necessarily open to the lieges in general ; the Colleges, as private institutions, might universally do as some have actually done — close their gates upon all, except their foundation members.

The University and Colleges are thus neither identical, nor vicarious of each other. If the University ceases to perform its functions, it ceases to exist ; and the privileges accorded by the nation to the system of public education legally organized in the University cannot, without the consent of the nation — far less without the consent of the academical legislature — be lawfully transferred to the system of private education precariously organized in the Colleges, and over which neither the State nor the University have any control. They have, however, been unlawfully usurped.

Through the suspension of the University, and the usurpation of its functions and privileges by the Collegial bodies, there has arisen the second of two systems, diametrically opposite to each other. The one in which the University was paramount is antient and statutory ; the other, in which the Colleges have the ascendant, is recent and illegal. In the former, all was subservient to public utility, and the interests of science ; in the latter, all is sacrificed to private monopoly, and to the convenience of the teacher. The former amplified the means of education in accommodation to the mighty end which a University proposes ; the latter limits the end which the University attempts to the capacity of the petty instruments which the intrusive system employs. The one afforded education in all the Faculties ; the other professes to furnish only elementary tuition in the lowest. In the authorized system, the cycle of instruction was distributed among a body of teachers, all professedly chosen from merit, and each concentrating his ability on a single object ; in the unauthorized, every branch, necessary to be learned, is monopolized by an individual privileged to teach all, though probably ill qualified to teach any. The old system daily collected into large classes, under the same professor, the whole youth of the University of equal standing, and thus rendered possible a keen and steady competition ; the new, which elevates the colleges and halls into so many little universities,

and in these houses distributes the students, without regard to ability or standing, among some fifty tutors, frustrates all emulation among the members of its small and ill-assorted classes. In the superseded system, the Degrees in all the Faculties were solemn testimonials that the graduate had accomplished a regular course of study in the public schools of the University, and approved his competence by exercise and examination; and on these degrees, only as such testimonials, and solely for the public good, were there bestowed by the civil legislature great and exclusive privileges in the church, in the courts of law, and in the practice of medicine. In the superseding system, Degrees in all the Faculties, except the lowest department of the lowest, certify neither a course of academical study, nor any ascertained proficiency in the graduate; and these now nominal distinctions retain their privileges to the public detriment, and for the benefit only of those by whom they have been deprived of their significance. Such is the general contrast of the two systems, which we must now exhibit in detail.

System de jure. The *Corpus Statutorum* by which the University of Oxford is — we should say, *ought* to be — governed, was digested by a committee appointed for that purpose, through the influence of Laud, and solemnly ratified by King, Chancellor, and Convocation, in the year 1636. The far greater number of those statutes had been previously in force; and, except in certain articles subsequently added, modified, or restricted, (contained in the Appendix and Addenda,) they exclusively determine the law and constitution of the University to the present hour. Every member is bound by oath and subscription to their faithful observance. — In explanation of the statutory system of instruction, it may be proper to say a few words in regard to the history of academical teaching, previous to the publication of the Laudian Code.

In the original constitution of Oxford, as in that of all the older universities of the Parisian model, the business of instruction was not confided to a special body of privileged professors. The University was governed, the University was taught, by the graduates at large; Professor, Master, Doctor, were originally synonymous. Every graduate had an equal right of teaching publicly in the University the subjects competent to his faculty, and to the rank of his degree; nay, every graduate incurred the obligation of teaching publicly, for a certain period, the subjects of his faculty, for such was the condition involved in the grant of the degree itself. The Bachelor, or imperfect graduate, partly as an exercise towards the higher honour, and useful to himself, partly as a performance due for the degree obtained, and of advantage to others, was bound to read under a master or doctor in his faculty a course of lectures; and the master, doctor, or perfect graduate was, in like manner, after his promotion, obliged immediately to commence, (*incipere*,) and to continue for a certain period publicly to teach, (*regere*,) some at least of the subjects pertaining to his faculty. As, however, it was only necessary for the University to enforce this obligation of public teaching, compulsory on all graduates during the term of their *necessary regency*, if there did not come forward a competent number of *voluntary regents* to execute this function; and as the schools belonging to the several faculties, and in which alone all public or ordinary instruction could be delivered, were frequently inadequate to accommodate the multitude of the inceptors; it came to pass that

in these Universities the original period of necessary regency was once and again abbreviated, and even a dispensation from actual teaching during its continuance, commonly allowed.* At the same time, as the University only accomplished the end of its existence through its regents, they alone were allowed to enjoy full privileges in its legislation and government. In Paris, the non-regent graduates were only assembled on rare and extraordinary occasions; in Oxford, the regents formed the House of Congregation, which, among other exclusive prerogatives, antiently constituted the initiatory assembly, through which it behoved that every measure should pass before it could be submitted to the House of Convocation, composed indifferently of all regents and non-regents resident in the University.†

This distinction of regent and non-regent continued most rigidly marked in the Faculty of Arts — the faculty on which the older universities were originally founded, and which was always greatly the most numerous. In the other faculties, both in Paris and Oxford, all doctors succeeded in usurping the style and privileges of *regent*, though not actually engaged in teaching; and in Oxford, the same was allowed to masters of the Faculty of Arts during the statutory period of their necessary regency, even when availing themselves of a dispensation from the performance of its duties; and extended to the Heads of Houses, (who were also in Paris *Regens d'honneur*,) and to College Deans. This explains the constitution of the Oxford House of Congregation at the present day.

The antient system of academical instruction by the graduates at large was, however, still more essentially modified by another innovation. The regents were entitled to exact from their auditors a certain regulated fee (*pastus, collectum*). To relieve the scholars of this burden, and to secure the services of able teachers, salaries were sometimes given to certain graduates, on consideration of their delivery of ordinary lectures without collect. In many universities, attendance on these courses was specially required of those proceeding to a degree; and it was to the salaried graduates that the title of *Professors*, in academical language, was at last peculiarly attributed. By this institution of salaried lecturers, dispensation could be universally accorded to the other graduates. The unsalaried regents found, in general, their schools deserted for the gratuitous instruction of the privileged lecturers; and though the right of public teaching competent to every graduate still remained entire, its exercise was, in a great measure, abandoned to the body of professors organized more or less completely in the several faculties throughout the universities of Europe. To speak only of Oxford, and in Oxford only of the Faculty of Arts, ten salaried readers

* In Oxford, where the public schools of the Faculty of Arts, in *School Street*, were proportionally more numerous (there are known by name above *forty* sets of schools antiently open in that street, *i. e.* buildings containing from four to sixteen class-rooms) than those in Paris belonging to the different nations of that faculty, in the *Rue de la Fouarre*, this dispensation was more tardily allowed. In Paris, the master, who was desirous of exercising this privilege of his degree, petitioned his faculty *pro regentia et scholis*; and schools, as they fell vacant, were granted to him by his nation, according to his seniority.

† It was only by an abusive fiction that those were subsequently held to be *Convictores*, or actual residents in the University, who retained their names on the books of a Hall or College.

or professors of the *seven arts* and the *three philosophies** had been nominated by the House of Congregation, and attendance on their lectures enforced by statute, long prior to the epoch of the Laudian digest. At the date of that code, the greater number of these chairs had obtained permanent endowments; and four only depended for a fluctuating stipend on certain fines and taxes levied on the graduates they relieved from teaching, and on the under graduates they were appointed to teach. At that period it was, however, still usual for simple graduates to exercise their right of lecturing in the public schools. While this continued, ability possessed an opportunity of honourable manifestation; a nursery of experienced teachers was afforded; the salaried readers were not allowed to slumber in the quiescence of an unfringible monopoly; their election could less easily degenerate into a matter of interest and favour; while the student, presented with a more extensive sphere of information, was less exposed to form exclusive opinions when hearing the same subjects treated by different lecturers in different manners. These advantages have, by such an arrangement, been secured in the German universities.

In Oxford, the *Corpus Statutorum* introduced little or no change in the mechanism of academical instruction; nor has this been done by any subsequent enactment. On the contrary, the most recent statutes on the subject—those of 1801 and 1808—recognise the antient system ratified under Laud, as that still in force, and actually in operation. (Corp. Stat. T. iv. Add. p. 129—133. p. 190—192.) The scheme thus established in law, though now abolished in fact, is as follows:—

Education is afforded in all the faculties in which degrees are granted, by the University itself, through its accredited organs, the public readers or professors—a regular attendance on whose lectures during a stated period is in every faculty indispensably requisite to qualify for a degree. To say nothing of Music, the University grants degrees, and furnishes instruction in four faculties—Arts, Theology, Civil Law, and Medicine.†

In *Arts* there are established *eleven* Public Readers or Professors; a regular attendance on whose courses is necessary during a period of four years to qualify for bachelor—during seven, to qualify for master. The student must frequent during the first year the lectures on Gram-

* The Faculty of Arts originally comprehended, besides the three philosophies, the whole seven arts. Of these latter, some were, however, at different times, thrown out of the faculty, or separated from the other arts, and special degrees given in them either apart from, or in subordination to, the general degree. Thus, in Oxford, special degrees were given in Grammar, in Rhetoric, and in Music. The two former subjects were again withdrawn into the faculty, and their degrees waxed obsolete—but Music and its degree still remain apart. The General Sophist was a special degree in Logic, but subordinate to the general degree in Arts. It is needless to say, that these particular degrees gave no entry into the academical assemblies. The historians of the universities of Paris and Oxford have misconceived this subject, from not illustrating the practice of the one school by that of the other. Duboullay and Wood knew nothing of each other's works, though writing at the same time, and Crevier never looked beyond Duboullay.

† Since the Reformation, as the subject of the faculty of Canon Law was no longer taught, degrees in that faculty have very properly been discontinued. But why are degrees still continued in the other faculties, in which the relative instruction is no longer afforded?

mar and Rhetoric; during the second, Logic and Moral Philosophy; during the third and fourth, Logic and Moral Philosophy, Geometry and Greek; during the fifth, (bachelors of first year,) Geometry, Metaphysics, History, Greek — and Hebrew, if destined for the church; during the sixth and seventh, Astronomy, Natural Philosophy, Metaphysics, History, Greek — and Hebrew, if divines.

To commence student in the faculty of *Theology*, a mastership in arts is a requisite preliminary. There are two professors of Divinity, on whom attendance is required, during seven years for the degree of bachelor, and subsequently during four for that of doctor.

In the faculty of *Civil Law* there is one professor. The student is not required to have graduated in arts; but if a master in that faculty, three years of attendance on the professor qualify him for a bachelor's degree, and four thereafter for a doctor's. The simple student must attend his professor during five years for bachelor, and ten for doctor; and previous to commencing student in this faculty, he must have frequented the courses of logic, moral and political philosophy, and of the other humane sciences, during two years, and history until his presentation for bachelor. By recent statute, to commence the study of law, it is necessary to pass the examination for bachelor of arts.

To commence student in *Medicine*, it is necessary to have obtained a mastership in arts, and thereafter the candidate (besides a certain attendance on the prælector of anatomy) must have heard the professor of medicine during three years for the degree of bachelor, and again during four years for that of doctor.*

The professors are bound to lecture during term, with exception of Lent, *i. e.* for about six months annually, twice a week, and for two full hours†; and penalties are incurred by teacher and student for any negligence in the performance of their several duties. Among other useful regulations, it is enjoined, 'that after lecture, the professors ' should tarry for some time in the schools; and if any scholar or ' auditor may wish to argue against what has been delivered from the ' chair, or may otherwise have any dubiety to resolve, that they should ' listen to him kindly, and satisfy his difficulties and doubts.'

But though a body of professors was thus established as the special organ through which the University effected the purposes of its institution, the right was not withdrawn, nay, is expressly declared to remain inviolate, which every master and doctor, possessed in virtue of his degree, of opening in the public schools a course of lectures on any of the subjects within the compass of his faculty. (Corp. St. T. iv. § 1.)

But besides the public and principal means of instruction afforded by the professors and other regents in the University, the student was subjected until his first degree, or during the first four years of his academical life, to the subsidiary and private discipline of a tutor in the Hall or College to which he belonged. This regulation was rendered peculiarly expedient by circumstances which no longer exist. Prior to the period of the Laudian digest, it was customary to enter

* Of several other chairs subsequently established, we make no mention, as these were never constituted into necessary parts of the academical system.

† Previously to Laud's statutes, the professors in general were bound to lecture *daily*, and all, if we recollect, at least *four times* a week. The change was absurd. It was *standing* which should have been shortened.

the University at a very early age ; and the student of those times, when he obtained the rank of master, was frequently not older than the student of the present when he matriculates. It was of course found useful to place these academical boys under the special guardianship of a tutor during the earlier years of their residence in the University. With this, however, as a merely private concern, the University did not interfere ; and we doubt whether, before the chancellorship of Leicester, any attempt was made to regulate, by academical authority, the character of those who might officiate in this capacity ; or before the chancellorship of Laud, to render imperative the entering under a tutor at all, and a tutor resident in the same house with the pupil. (Compare Wood's Annals, a. 1581, and Corp. Stat. T. iii. § 2.) Be this, however, as it may, the tutorial office was viewed as one of very subordinate importance in the statutory system. To commence tutor, it was only necessary for a student to have the lowest degree in arts, and that his learning, his moral and religious character, should be approved of by the head of the house in which he resided, or, in the event of controversy on this point, by the vice-chancellor. All that was expected of him was ' to imbue his pupils with good principles, and institute them ' in approved authors ; but above all, in the rudiments of religion, and ' the doctrine of the Thirty-nine Articles ; and that he should do all ' that in him lay to render them conformable to the church of Eng- ' land.' ' It is also his duty to contain his pupils within statutory ' regulations in matters of external appearance, such as their clothes, ' boots, and hair ; which, if the pupils are found to transgress, the ' tutor for the first, second, and third offence, shall forfeit six and ' eight-pence, and for the fourth shall be interdicted from his tutorial ' function by the vice-chancellor.' (T. iii. § 2.) Who could have anticipated from this statute what the tutor was ultimately to become ?

The preceding outline is sufficient to show that by statute the University of Oxford proposes an end not less comprehensive than other universities, and attempts to accomplish that end by the same machinery which they employ. It proposes, as its adequate end, the education of youth in the faculties of arts, theology, law, and medicine ; and for accomplishment of this, a body of public lecturers constitute the instrument which it principally, if not exclusively, employs. But as the University of Oxford only executes its purpose, and therefore only realizes its existence, through the agency of its professorial system ; consequently, whatever limits, weakens, or destroys the efficiency of that system, limits, weakens, and destroys the University itself. With the qualities of this system, as organized in Oxford, we have at present no concern. We may, however, observe, that if not perfect, it was perfectible ; and at the date of its establishment, there were few universities in Europe which could boast of an organization of its public instructors more complete, and none perhaps in which that organization was so easily susceptible of so high an improvement.

In the system *de facto* all is changed. The University is in abeyance ; — *Magni stat nominis umbra*. In none of the faculties is it supposed that the professors any longer furnish the instruction necessary for a degree. Some chairs are even nominally extinct, where an endowment has not perpetuated the sinecure ; and the others betray, in general, their existence only through the Calendar. If the silence of the schools be occasionally broken by a formal lecture, or if on some popular subjects (fees being now permitted) a short course be usually delivered ;

attendance on these is not more required or expected than attendance in the music-room. For every degree in every faculty above Bachelor of Arts, standing on the books, is allowed to count for residence in the University and attendance on the public courses; and though, under these circumstances, examinations be more imperatively necessary, a real examination only exists for the elementary degree, of which residence is also a condition.

It is thus not even pretended that Oxford now supplies more than the preliminary of an academical education. Even this is not afforded by the University, but abandoned to the Colleges and Halls; and the Academy of Oxford is therefore not one public University, but merely a collection of private schools. The University, in fact, exists only in semblance, for the behoof of the unauthorized seminaries by which it has been replaced, and which have contrived, under covert of its name, to slip into possession of its public privileges.*

But as academical education was usurped by the tutors from the professors — so all tutorial education was usurped by the *fellows* from the other graduates. The fellows exclusively teach all that Oxford now deems necessary to be taught; and as every tutor is singly vicarious of the whole antient body of professors — ἀνὴρ πολλῶν ἀντάξιος ἄλλων — the present capacity of the University to effect the purposes of its establishment must, consequently, be determined by the capacity of each fellow-tutor to compass the encyclopædia of academical instruction. If Oxford accomplishes the objects of a University even in its lowest faculty, every fellow-tutor is a second ‘Universal Doctor,’

Qui tria, qui septem, qui omne scibile novit.

But while thus resting her success on the *extraordinary* ability of her teachers, we shall see that she makes no provision even for their *ordinary* competence.

As the fellowships were not founded for the purposes of teaching, so the qualifications that constitute a fellow are not those that constitute

* How completely the *University* is annihilated — how completely even all memory of its history, all knowledge of its constitution, have perished in Oxford, is significantly shown in the following passage, written by a very able defender of things as they now are in that seminary. ‘There are, moreover, some points in the constitution of this place, which are carefully kept out of sight by our revilers, but which ought to be known and well considered, before any comparison is made between what we are and what we ought to be. THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD IS NOT A NATIONAL FOUNDATION. It is a congeries of foundations, originating some in royal munificence, but more in private piety and bounty. They are moulded indeed into one corporation; but each one of our twenty Colleges is a corporation by itself, and has its own peculiar statutes, not only regulating its internal affairs, but confining its benefits by a great variety of limitations.’ *Reply to the Calumnies of the Edinburgh Review*, page 183. We shall content ourselves with quoting a sentence from the ‘*Abstract of divers Privileges and Rights of the University of Oxford*,’ by the celebrated Dr. Wallis, the least of whose merits was an intimate acquaintance with the history and constitution of the establishment of which he was Registrar. ‘The rights or privileges (whatever they be) [are] not granted or belonging to Scholars as living in Colleges, &c., but to Colleges, &c. as houses inhabited by Scholars, the Colleges which we now have being accidental to the corporation of the University, and the confining of Scholars now to a certain number of Colleges and Halls being extrinsical to the University, and by a law of their own making, each College (but not the Halls) being a distinct corporation from that of the University.’

an instructor. The Colleges owe their establishment to the capricious bounty of individuals, and the fellow rarely owes his eligibility to merit alone, but in the immense majority of cases to fortuitous circumstances.* The fellowships in Oxford are, with few exceptions, limited to founder's kin,—to founder's kin, born in particular counties, or educated at particular schools—to the scholars of certain schools, without restriction, or narrowed by some additional circumstance of age or locality of birth,—to the natives of certain dioceses, archdeaconries, islands, counties, towns, parishes or manors, under every variety of arbitrary condition. In some cases, the candidate must be a graduate of a certain standing, in others he must not; in some he must be in orders, perhaps priest's, in others he is only bound to enter the church within a definite time. In some cases the fellow may freely choose his profession; in general he is limited to theology, and in a few instances must proceed in law or medicine. The nomination is sometimes committed to an individual, sometimes to a body of men, and these either within or without the College and University; but in general it belongs to the fellows. The elective power is rarely, however, deposited in worthy hands; and even when circumstances permit any liberty of choice, desert has too seldom a chance in competition with favour. With one unimportant exception, the fellowships are perpetual; but they are vacated by marriage, and by acceptance of a living in the church above a limited amount. They vary greatly in emolument in different Colleges; and in the same Colleges the difference is often considerable between those on different foundations, and on the same foundations between the senior and the junior fellowships. Some do not even afford the necessaries of life; others are more than competent to its superfluities. Residence is *now* universally dispensed with; though in some cases certain advantages are only to be enjoyed on the spot. In the church, the Colleges possess considerable patronage; the livings as they fall vacant are at the option of the fellows in the order of seniority; and the advantage of a fellowship depends often less on the amount of salary which it immediately affords, than on the value of the preferment to which it may ultimately lead.

But while, as a body, the fellows can thus hardly be supposed to rise above the average amount of intelligence and acquirement; so, of the fellows, it is not those best competent to its discharge who are generally found engaged in the business of tuition.

* This is candidly acknowledged by the intelligent apologist just quoted. 'In most Colleges the fellowships are appropriated to certain schools, dioceses, counties, and in some cases even to parishes, with a preference given to the founder's kindred for ever. Many qualifications, quite foreign to intellectual talents and learning, are thus enjoined by the founders; and in *very few* instances is a free choice of candidates allowed to the fellows of a College, upon any vacancy in their number. *Merit therefore has not such provision made as the extent of the endowments might seem to promise.* Now it is certain that each of these various institutions is not the best. The best of them perhaps are those [how many are there?] where an unrestrained choice is left among all candidates who have taken one degree. The worst are those which are appropriated to schools, from which boys of sixteen or seventeen are forwarded to a fixed station and emolument, which nothing can forfeit but flagrant misconduct, and which no exertion can render more valuable.' *Reply to the Calumnies, &c.* page 183. We may add, that even where 'a free choice of candidates is allowed,' the electors are not always Fellows either of Oriel College, Oxford, or of Trinity College, Cambridge.

In the first place, there is no power of adequate selection, were there even sufficient materials from which to choose. The head, himself of the same leaven with the fellows, cannot be presumed greatly to transcend their level; and he is peculiarly exposed to the influence of that party spirit by which collegial bodies are so frequently distracted. Were his approbation of tutors, therefore, free, we could have no security for the wisdom and impartiality of his choice. But, in point of fact, he can only legally refuse his sanction on the odious grounds of ignorance, vice, or irreligion. The tutors are thus virtually self-appointed.

But in the second place, a fellow constitutes himself a tutor, not because he suits the office, but because the office is convenient to him. The standard of tutorial capacity and of tutorial performance is in Oxford too low to frighten even the diffident or lazy. The advantages of the situation in point either of profit or reputation are not sufficient to tempt ambitious talent; and distinguished ability is sure soon to be withdrawn from the vocation,—if marriage does not precipitate a retreat.* The fellow who in general undertakes the office, and continues the longest to discharge it, is a clerical expectant whose hopes are bounded by a College living; and who, until the wheel of promotion has moved round, is content to relieve the tedium of a leisure life by the interest of an occupation, and to improve his income by its emoluments. Thus it is that tuition is not solemnly engaged in as an important, arduous, responsible, and permanent occupation; but lightly viewed and undertaken as a matter of convenience, a business by the by, a state of transition, a stepping-stone to something else.

But in the third place, were the tutors not the creatures of accident, did merit exclusively determine their appointment, and did the situation tempt the services of the highest talent, still it would be impossible to find a complement of able men equal in number to the cloud of tutors whom Oxford actually employs.

This general demonstration of what the fellow-tutors of Oxford must be, is more than confirmed by a view of what they actually are. It is not contended that the system excludes men of merit, but that merit is in general the accident, not the principle, of their appointment. We might, therefore, always expect, on the common doctrine of probabilities, that among the multitude of college tutors, there should be a few known to the world for ability and erudition. But we assert, without fear of contradiction, that, on the average, there is to be found among those to whom Oxford confides the business of education, an infinitely smaller proportion of men of literary reputation, than among the actual instructors of any other University in the world. For example: the second work at the head of this article exhibits the names of above forty fellow-tutors; yet among these we have not encountered a single individual of whose literary existence the public is aware. This may be an unfavourable accident; but where is the University out of Britain of which so little could at any time be said?

* ‘So far from a College being a drain upon the world, the world drains Colleges of their *most efficient* members; and although the University *thus becomes a more effectual engine of education* [!how?] it loses much of that characteristic feature it once had, as a residence of learned leisure, and an emporium of literature.’ *Reply to the Calumnies*, &c. page 185.

We at present consider the system *de facto* in itself, and without reference to its effects ; and say nothing of its qualities, except in so far as these are involved in the bare statement of its organization. So much, however, is notorious ; either the great University of Oxford does not now attempt to accomplish what it was established to effect, and what every, even the meanest, University proposes ; or it attempts this by means inversely proportioned to the end, and thus ludicrously fails in the endeavour. That there is much of good, much worthy of imitation by other Universities, in the present spirit and present economy of Oxford, we are happy to acknowledge, and may at another time endeavour to demonstrate. But this good is *occasioned*, not *effected* ; it exists not in consequence of any excellence in the instructors ; and is only favoured in so far as it is compatible with the interest of those private corporations, who administer the University exclusively for their own benefit. As *at present organized*, it is a doubtful problem whether the tutorial system ought not to be abated as a nuisance. For if some tutors may afford assistance to some pupils, to other pupils other tutors prove equally an impediment. We are no enemies of collegial residence, no enemies of a tutorial discipline, even now when its former necessity has in a great measure been superseded. To vindicate its utility under present circumstances, it must, however, be raised not merely from its actual corruption, but even to a higher excellence than it possessed by its original constitution. A tutorial system in subordination to a professorial (which Oxford formerly enjoyed) we regard as affording the condition of an absolutely perfect University. But the tutorial system, as now dominant in Oxford, is vicious, in its *application* — as usurping the place of the professorial, whose function, under any circumstances, it is inadequate to discharge ; and in its *constitution* — the tutors, as now fortuitously appointed, being, as a body, incompetent even to the duties of subsidiary instruction.

II. We come now to our second subject of consideration — to inquire by what causes and for what ends this revolution was accomplished ; how the English Universities, and in particular Oxford, passed from a legal to an illegal state, and from public Universities were degraded into private schools ? The answer is precise : this was effected solely by the influence, and exclusively for the advantage, of the Colleges : but it requires some illustration to understand how the interest of these private corporations was opposed to that of the public institution, of which they were the accidents ; and how their domestic tuition was able gradually to undermine, and ultimately to supersede, the system of academical lectures in aid of which it was established.

Though Colleges be unessential accessories to a University, yet common circumstances occasioned, throughout all the older Universities, the foundation of conventual establishments for the habitation, support, and subsidiary discipline of the student ; and the date of the earliest Colleges is not long posterior to the date of the most antient Universities. Establishments of this nature are thus not peculiar to England ; and like the greater number of her institutions, they were borrowed by Oxford from the mother University of Paris — but with peculiar and important modifications. A sketch of the Collegial system as variously organized, and as variously affecting the academical constitution in foreign Universities, will afford a clearer conception of the distinctive character of that system in those of England, and of the paramount and unexampled influence it has exerted in determining their corruption.

The causes which originally promoted the establishment of Colleges were very different from those which subsequently occasioned their increase, and are to be found in the circumstances under which the earliest Universities sprang up. The great concourse of the studios, from every country of Europe, to the illustrious teachers of law, medicine, and philosophy, who in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries opened their schools in Bologna, Salerno, and Paris, necessarily occasioned, in these cities, a scarcity of lodgings, and an exorbitant demand for rent. Various means were adopted to alleviate this inconvenience, but with inadequate effect; and the hardships to which the poorer students were frequently exposed moved compassionate individuals to provide houses, in which a certain number of indigent scholars might be accommodated with free lodging during the progress of their studies. The manners, also, of the cities in which the early Universities arose, were, for obvious reasons, more than usually corrupt; and even attendance on the public teachers forced the student into dangerous and degrading associations.* Piety thus concurred with benevolence in supplying houses in which poor scholars might be harboured without cost, and youth, removed from perilous temptation, be placed under the control of an overseer; and an example was afforded for imitation in the *Hospitia* which the religious orders established in the University towns for those of their members who were now attracted, as teachers and learners, to these places of literary resort. Free board was soon added to free lodging; and a small bursary or stipend generally completed the endowment. With moral superintendence was conjoined literary discipline, but still in subservience to the public exercises and lectures: opportunity was obtained of constant disputation, to which the greatest importance was not unwisely attributed through all the scholastic ages; while books, which only affluent individuals could then afford to purchase, were supplied for the general use of the indigent community.

But as Paris was the University in which collegial establishments were first founded, so Paris was the University in which they soonest obtained the last and most important extension of their purposes. Regents were occasionally taken from the public schools, and placed as regular lecturers within the Colleges. Sometimes nominated, always controlled, and only degraded by their faculty, these lecturers were

* ‘Tunc autem,’ says the Cardinal de Vitry, who wrote in the first half of the thirteenth century, in speaking of the state of Paris,—‘tunc autem amplius in Clero quam in alio populo dissoluta (Lutetia sc.), tamquam capra scabiosa et ovis morbida pernicioso exemplo multos hospites suos undique ad eam affluentes corrumpibat, habitatores suos devorans et in profundum demergens, simplicem fornicationem nullum peccatum reputabat. Meretrices publicæ ubique per vicos et plateas civitatis passim ad lupanaria sua clericos transeuntes quasi per violentiam pertrahebant. Quod si forte ingredi recusarent, confestim eos Sodomitas, post ipsos conclamantes dicebant. In una autem et eadem domo scholæ erant superius, prostibula inferius. In parte superiori magistri legebant, in inferiori meretrices officia turpitudinis exercebant. Ex una parte meretrices inter se et cum Cenonibus [lenonibus] litigabant: ex alia parte disputantes et contentiose agentes clerici proclamabant.’—(Jacobi de Vitriaco, Hist. Occident. cap. vii.)—It thus appears that the schools of the Faculty of Arts were not as yet established in the *Rue de la Fouarre*. At this date in Paris, as originally also in Oxford, the lectures and disputations were conducted by the masters in their private habitations.

recognized as among its teachers ; and the same privileges accorded to the attendance on their College courses, as on those delivered by other graduates in the common schools of the University. Different Colleges thus afforded the means of academical education in certain departments of a faculty—in a whole faculty—or in several faculties ; and so far they constituted particular incorporations of teachers and learners, apart from, and independent of, the general body of the University. They formed, in fact, so many petty Universities, or so many fragments of a University. Into the Colleges, thus furnished with professors, there were soon admitted to board and education pensioners, or scholars not on the foundation ; and nothing more was wanting to supersede the lecturer in the public schools, than to throw open these domestic classes to the members of the other Colleges, and to the *martinets* or scholars of the University not belonging to Colleges at all. In the course of the fifteenth century this was done ; and the University and Colleges were thus intimately united. The College regents, selected for talent, and recommended to favour by their nomination, soon diverted the students from the unguaranteed courses of the lecturers in the University schools. The great faculties of theology and arts became at last exclusively collegial. With the exception of two courses in the College of Navarre, the lectures, disputations, and acts of the Theological Faculty were confined to the College of the Sorbonne ; and the Sorbonne thus became convertible with the Theological Faculty of Paris. During the latter half of the fifteenth century, the ‘ famous Colleges,’ or those ‘ of complete exercise,’ (*cc. magna, celebria, famosa, famata, de plein exercice,*) in the Faculty of Arts, amounted to *eighteen*—a number which, before the middle of the seventeenth, had been reduced to *ten*. About eighty others, (*cc. parva, non celebria,*) of which above a half still subsisted in the eighteenth century, taught either only the subordinate branches of the faculty, (grammar and rhetoric,) and this only to those on the foundation, or merely afforded habitation and stipend to their bursars, now admitted to education in all the larger colleges, with the illustrious exception of Navarre. The *Rue de la Fouarre*, (*vicus stramineus,*) which contained the schools belonging to the different nations of the faculty, and to which the lectures in philosophy had been once exclusively confined, became less and less frequented ; until at last the public chair of Ethics, long perpetuated by an endowment, alone remained ; and ‘ the street’ would have been wholly abandoned by the university, had not the acts of Determination, the forms of Inceptorship, and the Examinations of some of the nations, still connected the Faculty of Arts with this venerable site. The colleges of full exercise in this faculty continued to combine the objects of a classical school and university ; for, besides the art of grammar taught in six or seven classes of humanity or antient literature, they supplied courses of rhetoric, logic, metaphysics, physics, mathematics, and morals ; the several subjects taught by different professors. A free competition was thus maintained between the Colleges ; the principals had every inducement to appoint only the most able teachers ; and the emoluments of the rival professors (who were not astricted to celibacy) depended mainly on their fees. A blind munificence quenched this useful emulation. In the year 1719, fixed salaries and retiring pensions were assigned by the crown to the college regents ; the lieges at large

now obtained the gratuitous instruction which the poor had always enjoyed, but the University gradually declined.

After Paris, no continental University was more affected in its fundamental faculty by the collegial system than Louvain. Originally, as in Paris, and the other Universities of the Parisian model, the lectures in the Faculty of Arts were exclusively delivered by the regents *in vico*, or in the *general* schools, to each of whom a certain subject of philosophy, and a certain hour of teaching, was assigned. Colleges were founded; and in some of these, during the fifteenth century, *particular* schools were established. The regents in these colleges were not disowned by the faculty, to whose control they were subjected. Here, as in Paris, the lectures by the regents *in vico* gradually declined, till at last the three public professorships of Ethics, Rhetoric, and Mathematics, perpetuated by endowment, were in the seventeenth century the only classes that remained open in the halls of the Faculty of Arts, in which, besides other exercises, the Quodlibetic Disputations were still annually performed. The general tuition of that faculty was conducted in four rival colleges of full exercise, or *paedagogia*, as they were denominated, in contradistinction to the other colleges, intended less for the education than for the habitation and aliment of youth during their studies. These last, which amounted to above thirty, sent their bursars for education to the four privileged Colleges of the Faculty; to one or other of which these minor establishments were in general astricted. In the *paedagogia*, with the single exception of the *Collegium Porci*, Philosophy alone was taught, and this under the fourfold division of Logic, Physics, Metaphysics, and Morals, by four ordinary professors and a principal. Instruction in the *Litteræ Humaniores* was, in the seventeenth century, discontinued in the other three (*cc. Castri, Lili, Falconis*); — the earlier institution in this department being afforded by the oppidan schools then every where established; the higher by the *Collegium Gandense*; and the highest by the three professors of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew literature, in the *Collegium trilingue*, founded in 1517, by Hieronymus Buslidius — a memorable institution, imitated by Francis I. in Paris, by Fox and Wolsey in Oxford, and by Ximenes in Alcala de Henares. In the *paedagogia* the discipline was rigorous; the diligence of the teachers admirably sustained by the rivalry of the different Houses; and the emulation of the students, roused by daily competition in their several classes and colleges, was powerfully directed towards the great general contest, in which all the candidates for a degree in arts from the different *paedagogia* were brought into concourse — publicly and minutely tried by sworn examiners — and finally arranged with rigorous impartiality in the strict order of merit. This competition for academical honours, long the peculiar glory of Louvain, is only to be paralleled by the present examinations in the English Universities*; we may explain the former when we come to speak of the latter.

In Germany collegial establishments did not obtain the same preponderance as in the Netherlands and France. In the older universities of the empire, the academical system was not essentially modified by these institutions; and in the universities founded after the commencement

* We suspect that the present Cambridge scheme of examination and honours was a direct imitation of that of Louvain. The similarity in certain points seems too precise to be accidental.

of the sixteenth century, they were rarely called into existence. In Prague, Vienna, Heidelberg, Cologne, Erfurth, Leipsic, Rostoch, Ingolstadt, Tübingen, &c. we find conventual establishments for the habitation, aliment, and superintendence of youth; but these, always subsidiary to the public system, were rarely able, after the revival of letters, to maintain their importance even in this subordinate capacity.

In Germany, the name of *College* was usually applied to foundations destined principally for the residence and support of the academical teachers; the name of *Bursa* was given to houses inhabited by students, under the superintendence of a graduate in arts. In the colleges, which were comparatively rare, if scholars were admitted at all, they received free lodging or free board, but not free domestic tuition; they were bound to be diligent in attendance on the lectures of the public readers in the University; and the governors of the house were enjoined to see that this obligation was faithfully performed. The *Bursæ*, which corresponded to the antient halls of Oxford and Cambridge, prevailed in all the older Universities of Germany. They were either benevolent foundations for the reception of a certain class of favoured students, who had sometimes also a small exhibition for their support (*bb. privatæ*), or houses licensed by the Faculty of Arts, to whom they exclusively belonged, in which the students admitted were bound to a certain stated contribution (*positio*) to a common exchequer (*bursa* — hence the name), and to obedience to the laws by which the discipline of the establishment was regulated (*bb. communes*). Of these varieties, the second was in general engrafted on the first. Every *bursa* was governed by a graduate (*rector, conventor*); and, in the larger institutions, under him, by his delegate (*conrector*) or assistants (*magistri conventores*). In most Universities it was enjoined that every regular student in the Faculty of Arts should enrol himself of a bursæ; but the bursæ was also frequently inhabited by masters engaged in public lecturing in their own, or in following the courses of a higher faculty. To the duty of rector belonged a general superintendence of the diligence and moral conduct of the inferior members, and (in the larger *bursæ*, with the aid of a *procurator* or *œconomus*) the management of the funds destined for the maintenance of the house. As in the colleges of France and England, he could enforce discipline by the infliction of corporeal punishment. Domestic instruction was generally introduced into these establishments, but, as we said, only in subservience to the public. The rector, either by himself or deputies, repeated with his bursars their public lessons, resolved difficulties they might propose, supplied deficiencies in their knowledge, and moderated at the performance of their private disputations.

The philosophical controversies which, during the middle ages, divided the universities of Europe into hostile parties, were waged with peculiar activity among a people, like the Germans, actuated, more than any other, by speculative opinion and the spirit of sect. The famous question touching the nature of Universals, which created a schism in the University of Prague, and thus founded the University of Leipsic, which formally separated into two, the faculty of arts in Ingolstadt, Tübingen, &c., and occasioned a ceaseless warfare in the other schools of philosophy throughout the empire, — this question modified the German *bursæ* in a far more decisive manner than it affected the colleges in the other countries of Europe. The Nominalists and Realists withdrew themselves into different *bursæ*; whence, as from opposite

castles, they daily descended to renew their clamorous, and not always bloodless, contests, in the arena of the public schools. In this manner the bursæ of Ingolstadt, Tübingen, Heidelberg, Erfurth, and other universities, were divided between the partisans of the *Via Antiquorum*, and the partisans of the *Via Modernorum*; and in some of the greater schools the several sects of Realism — the Albertists, Thomists, Scotists — had bursæ of their ‘*peculiar process*.’

The effect of this was to place these institutions more absolutely under that scholastic influence which swayed the faculties of arts and theology; and however adverse were the different sects, when a common enemy was at a distance, no sooner was the reign of scholasticism threatened by the revival of polite letters, than their particular dissensions were merged in a general resistance to the novelty equally obnoxious to all — a resistance which, if it did not succeed in obtaining the absolute proscription of classical literature in the Universities, succeeded, at least, in excluding it from the course prescribed for the degree in arts, and from the studies authorized in the bursæ, of which that faculty had universally the control. In their relations to the revival of antient learning, the bursæ of Germany, and the colleges of France and England, were directly opposed; and to this contrast is, in part, to be attributed the difference of their fate. The colleges, indeed, mainly owed their stability — in England to their wealth — in France to their coalition with the University. But in harbouring the rising literature, and rendering themselves instrumental to its progress, the colleges seemed anew to vindicate their utility, and remained, during the revolutionary crisis at least, in unison with the spirit of the age. The bursæ, on the contrary, fell at once into contempt with the antiquated learning which they defended; and before they were disposed to transfer their allegiance to the dominant literature, other instruments had been organized, and circumstances had superseded their necessity. The philosophical faculty to which they belonged had lost, by its opposition to the admission of humane letters into its course, the consideration it formerly obtained; and in the Protestant Universities a degree in arts was no longer required as a necessary passport to the other faculties. The Gymnasia, established or multiplied on the Reformation throughout Protestant Germany, sent the youth to the universities with sounder studies and at a maturer age; and the public prelections, no longer intrusted to the fortuitous competence of the graduates, were discharged, in chief, by professors carefully selected for their merit, — rewarded in exact proportion to their individual value in the literary market, — and stimulated to exertion by a competition unexampled in the academical arrangements of any other country. The discipline of the bursæ was now found less useful in aid of the University, and the student less disposed to submit to their restraint. No wealthy foundations perpetuated their existence independently of use; and their services being found too small to warrant their maintenance by compulsory regulations, they were in general abandoned.

In the English Universities, the history of the collegial element has been very different: nowhere did it deserve to exercise so small an influence; nowhere has it exercised so great. The colleges of the continental Universities were no hospitals for drones; their foundations were exclusively in favour of *teachers* and *learners*; the former, whose number was determined by their necessity, enjoyed their stipend under the condition of instruction; and the latter, only during the period of

their academical studies. In the English colleges, on the contrary, the fellowships, with hardly an exception, are perpetual, not burdened with tuition, and indefinite in number. In the foreign colleges, the instructors were chosen from competence. In those of England, but especially in Oxford, the fellows in general owe their election to chance. Abroad, as the colleges were visited, superintended, and reformed by their faculty, their lectures were acknowledged by the University as public courses, and the lecturers themselves at last recognised as its privileged professors. In England, as the University did not exercise the right of visitation over the colleges, their discipline was viewed as private and subsidiary; while the fellow was never recognised as a public character at all, far less as a privileged instructor. In Paris and Louvain, the college discipline superseded only the precarious lectures of the graduates at large.* In Oxford and Cambridge it was an improved and improvable system of professorial education that the tutorial extinguished. In the foreign Universities the right of academical instruction was deputed to a limited number of 'famous colleges,' and in these only to a full body of co-operative teachers. In Oxford all academical education is usurped, not only by every house, but by every fellow tutor it contains. The alliance between the Colleges and University in Paris and Louvain was, in the circumstances, perhaps a rational improvement,—the dethronement of the University by the Colleges in Oxford and Cambridge, without doubt, a preposterous revolution.

It was the very peculiarity in the constitution of the English colleges which disqualified them, above all similar incorporations, even for the lower offices of academical instruction, that enabled them in the end to engross the very highest; and it only requires an acquaintance with the history of the two Universities, to explain how a revolution so improbable in itself, and so disastrous in its effects, was, by the accident of circumstances, and the influence of private interest, accomplished. 'Reduce,' says Bacon, 'things to their first institution, and observe how they have degenerated.' This explanation, limited to Oxford, will be given by showing, 1. How the students, once distributed in numerous small societies through the halls, were at length collected into a few large communities within the colleges; 2. How in the colleges, thus the penfolds of the academical flock, the fellows frustrated the common right of graduates to the office of tutor; and, 3. How the fellow tutors supplanted the professors—how the colleges superseded the University.

1. In the mode of teaching—in the subjects taught—in the forms of graduation, and in the general mechanism of the faculties, no

* In Paris (1562) the celebrated Ramus proposed a judicious plan of reform for the Faculty of Arts. He disapproved of the lectures on philosophy established in the colleges, and was desirous of restoring these to the footing of the public courses delivered for so many centuries in the *Rue de la Fouarre*, and only suspended a few years previously; and that eight accredited professors should there teach the different branches of mathematics, physics, and morals, while the colleges should retain only instruction in grammar, rhetoric, and logic. This was to bring matters towards the very statutory constitution subverted in the English Universities by the colleges, and which, with all its imperfections, was even more complete than that proposed by Ramus, as an improvement on a collegial mechanism of tuition, perfection itself, in comparison to the intrusive system of Oxford.

Universities for a long time resembled each other more closely than the first and second schools of the church, Paris and Oxford; but in the constitution and civil polity of the bodies there were from the first considerable differences. In Oxford, the University was not originally established on the distinction of Nations; though, in the sequel, the great national schism of the northern and southern men had almost determined a division similar to that which prevailed from the first in the other antient Universities.* In Oxford, the chancellor and his deputy combined the powers of the rector and the two chancellors in Paris; and the inspection and control, chiefly exercised in the latter, through the distribution of the scholars of the University into nations and tribes, under the government of rector, procurators, and deans, was in the former more especially accomplished by collecting the students into certain privileged houses, under the control of a principal, responsible for the conduct of the members. This subordination was not indeed established at once; and the scholars at first lodged, without domestic superintendence, in the houses of the citizens. In the year 1231, we find it only ordained, 'that every clerk or scholar resident in Oxford must subject himself to the discipline and tuition of some master of the schools,' *i. e.*, we presume, enter himself as the peculiar disciple of one or other of the actual regents. (Wood's *Annals*, a. c.) By the commencement of the fifteenth century, it appears, however, to have become established law, that all scholars should be members of some college, hall, or entry, under a responsible head (Wood, a. 1408); and in the subsequent history of the university, we find more frequent and decisive measures taken in Oxford against the *Chamberdekyns*, or scholars haunting the schools, but of no authorized house, than in Paris were ever employed against the *Martinets*. (Wood, aa. 1413, 1422, 1512, &c.) In the foreign Universities it was never incumbent on any, beside the students of the Faculty of Arts, to be under collegial or bursal superintendence; in the English Universities, the graduates and under-graduates of every faculty were equally required to be members of a privileged house.

By this regulation, the students were compelled to collect themselves into houses of community, variously denominated Halls, Inns, Entries, Chambers (*Aulæ*, *Hospitia*, *Introitus*, *Cameræ*). These halls were governed by peculiar statutes established by the University, by whom they were also visited and reformed; and administered by a principal, elected by the scholars themselves, but admitted to his office by the chancellor or his deputy, on finding caution for payment of the rent. The halls were in general held only on lease; but by a privilege common to most Universities, houses once occupied by clerks or students could not again be resumed by the proprietor, or taken from the gown, if the rent were punctually discharged, the rate of which was quinquennially fixed by the academical taxators. The great majority of the scholars who inhabited these halls lived at their own expense; but the benevolent motives which, in other countries, determined the establishment of colleges and private bursæ, nowhere

* Matters went so far, that as, in Paris, each of the four nations elected its own procurator, so, in Oxford, (what is not mentioned by Wood,) the two procurators (*procuratores*) were necessarily chosen, one from the northern, the other from the southern men; also the two scrutators, antiently distinct (?) from the proctors.

operated more powerfully than in England.* In a few houses foundations were made for the support of a certain number of indigent scholars, who were incorporated as fellows, (or joint participators in the endowment,) under the government of a head. But with an unenlightened liberality, these benefactions were not, as elsewhere, exclusively limited to learners, during their academical studies, and to instructors; while the subjection of the colleges to private statutes, and their emancipation from the control of the academical authorities, gave them interests apart from those of the public, and not only disqualified them from co-operating towards the general ends of the University, but rendered them, instead of powerful aids, the worst impediments to its utility.

The colleges, into which commoners, or members not on the foundation, were, until a comparatively modern date, rarely admitted, remained also for many centuries few in comparison to the halls. The latter were counted by hundreds; the former, even at the present day, extend only to *nineteen*.

At the commencement of the fourteenth century, the number of the halls was about *three hundred*, (Wood, a. 1307) — the number of the secular colleges, at the highest, only *three*. At the commencement of the fifteenth century, when the colleges had risen to *seven*, a fellow of Queen's laments, that the students had diminished as the foundations had increased. (Ullerston, *Defensorium*, &c. written 1401.) At the commencement of the sixteenth century, the number of halls had fallen to *fifty-five*, (Wood, a. 1503,) while the secular colleges had, before 1516, been multiplied to *twelve*. The causes which had hitherto occasioned this diminution in the number of scholars, and in the number of the houses destined for their accommodation, were, among others, the plagues, by which Oxford was so frequently desolated, and the members of the University dispersed, — the civil wars of York and Lancaster, — the rise of other rival Universities in Great Britain and on the continent, — and, finally, the sinking consideration of the scholastic philosophy.† The character which the Reformation assumed in England co-operated, however, still more powerfully to the same result. Of itself, the schism in religion must necessarily have diminished the resort of students to the University, by banishing those who did not acquiesce in the new opinions there inculcated by law; while among the reformed themselves, there arose an influential party, who viewed the academical exercises as sophistical, and many who even regarded degrees as Antichristian. But in England the Reformation incidentally operated in a more peculiar manner. Unlike its fate in other countries, this religious revolution was absolutely governed by the fancies of the royal despot for the time; and so uncertain was the caprice of Henry, so contradictory the policy of his three immediate

* Lipsius, after speaking of the Pædagogia of Louvain — ‘Pergamus; nam et aliud Collegiorum genus est, ubi non tam docetur quam alitur juventus, et subsidia studiorum in certos annos habet. Pulchrum inventum, et quod in Anglia magnifice usurpatur: neque enim in orbe terrarum simile esse, addam et fuisse. Magnæ illic opes et vectigalia: verbo vobis dicam? Unum Oxoniense collegium (rem inquisivi) superet vel decem nostra.’ *Lovanium*, l. iii. c. 5. See also Polydori Virgilii *Angl. Hist.* l. v. p. 107. edit. Basil.

† The same decline was, at this period, experienced in the continental Universities.

successors, that for a long time it was difficult to know what was the religion by law established for the current year; far less possible to calculate, with assurance, on what would be the statutory orthodoxy for the ensuing. At the same time, the dissolution of the monastic orders dried up one great source of academical prosperity; while the confiscation of monastic property, which was generally regarded as only a foretaste of what awaited the endowments of the Universities, and the superfluous revenues of the clergy, rendered literature and the church, during this crisis, uninviting professions either for an ambitious or (if disinclined to martyrdom) for a conscientious man. The effect was but too apparent,—for many years the Universities were almost literally deserted.*

The halls, whose existence solely depended for their support on the confluence of students, thus fell; and none, it is probable, would have survived the crisis, had not several chanced to be the property of certain colleges, which had thus an interest in their support. The Halls of St. Alban, St. Edmund, St. Mary, New Inn, Magdalen, severally belonged to Merton, Queen's, Oriel, New, and Magdalen Colleges; and Broadgates Hall, now Pembroke College, Gloucester Hall, now Worcester College, and Hert Hall, subsequently Hertford College, owed

* In the year 1539, the House of Convocation complains, in a letter addressed to Secretary Cromwell, that 'the University, within the last five years, was greatly 'impaired, and the number of students diminished by one half;' and in a memorable epistle, some ten years previous, to Sir Thomas More, the same complaint had been still more strenuously urged.—'Pauperes enim sumus. Olim singuli nostrum annuum stipendium habuimus, aliqui à Nobilibus, nonnulli ab his qui Monasteriis præsunt, plurimi à Presbyteris quibus ruri sunt sacerdotia. Nunc vero tantum abest ut in hoc perstemus, ut illi quibus debeant solitum stipendium dare recusant. Abbates enim suos Monachos domum accersunt, Nobiles suos liberos, Presbyteri suos consanguineos: sic minuitur scholasticorum numerus, sic ruunt Aulæ nostræ, sic frigescunt omnes liberales disciplinæ. Collegia solum perseverant; quæ si quid solvere cogantur, cum solum habeant quantum sufficit in victum suo scholasticorum numero, necesse erit, aut ipsa una labi, aut socios aliquot ejici. Vides jam, More, quod nobis omnibus immineat periculum. Vides ex Academia futuram non Academiam, nisi tu cautius nostram causam egeris,' &c. (Wood, a. 1539, 1540.) In 1546, in which year the number of graduations had fallen so low as *thirteen*, the inhabited *halls* amounted only to *eight*, and even of these several were nearly empty. (Wood, a. 1546.) About the same time, the celebrated Walter Haddon laments, that in Cambridge 'the schools were never more solitary than at present; so notably few indeed are the students, that for every master that reads in them there is hardly left an auditor to listen.' (*Lucubrationes*, p. 12. edit. 1567.) 'In 1551,' says the Oxford Antiquary, 'the colleges, and especially the antient halls, lay either waste, or were become the receptacles of poor religious people turned out of their cloisters. The present halls, especially St. Edmund's and New Inn, were void of students.' (a. 1551.) 'The truth is, though the whole number of students were now a thousand and fifteen, that had names in the buttry books of each house of learning, yet the greater part were absent, and had taken their last farewell.' (a. 1552.) 'The two wells of learning,' says Dr. Bernard Gilpin, in 1552,—'the two wells of learning, Oxford and Cambridge, are dried up, students decayed, of which scarce an hundred are left of a thousand; and if in seven years more they should decay so fast, there would be almost none at all; so that the devil would make a triumph, whilst there were none learned to whom to commit the flock.' (*Sermons preached at Court*, edit. 1630. p. 23. See also Wood, aa. 1561, 1563.)

their salvation to their dependence on the foundations of Christ Church, St. John's, and Exeter.

The circumstances which occasioned the ruin of the halls, and the dissolution of the cloisters and colleges of the monastic orders, in Oxford, not only gave to the secular colleges, which all remained, a preponderant weight in the University, for the juncture, but allowed them so to extend their circuit, and to increase their numbers, that they were subsequently enabled to comprehend within their walls nearly the whole of the academical population, though, previously to the sixteenth century, they appear to have rarely, if ever, admitted independent members at all.* As the students fell off, the rents of the halls were taxed at a lower rate; and they became, at last, of so insignificant a value to the landlords, that they were always willing to dispose of this fallen and falling property for a trifling consideration. In Oxford, land and houses became a drug. The old colleges thus extended their limits, by easy purchase, from the impoverished burghers; and the new colleges, of which there were *four* established within half a century subsequent to the Reformation, and altogether *six* during the sixteenth century, were built on sites either obtained gratuitously or for an insignificant price. After this period only *one* college was founded—in 1610; and *three* of the eight halls transmuted into colleges, in 1610, 1702, and 1740; but of these *one* is now extinct.

These circumstances explain in what manner the halls declined. It remains to tell, why, in the most crowded state of the University, not one has been subsequently restored. Before the era of their downfall the establishment of a hall was easy. It required only that a few scholars should hire a house, find caution for a year's rent, and choose for Principal a graduate of respectable character. The Chancellor, or his Deputy, could not refuse to sanction the establishment. An act of usurpation abolished this facility. The general right of nomination to the principality, and consequently to the institution of halls, was, 'through the absolute potency he had,' procured by the Earl of Leicester, Chancellor of the University, about 1570; and it is now, by statute, vested in his successors.† In surrendering this privilege to the Chancellor, the colleges were not blind to their peculiar interest. From his situation, that magistrate was sure to be guided by their heads: no hall has since arisen to interfere with their monopoly; and the collegial interest, thus left without a counterpoise, and concentrated in a few hands, was soon able, as we shall see, to establish an absolute supremacy in the University.

2. By statute, the office of tutor is open to all graduates. This was, however, no barrier against the encroachment of the fellows; and the simple graduate, who should attempt to make good his right—how could he succeed?

As the colleges only received as members those not on the foundation, for their own convenience, they could either exclude them altogether, or admit them under whatever limitations they might choose to impose. By University law, graduates were not compelled to lodge in college; they were therefore excluded as unprofitable members, to

* See statute of 1489, quoted in Dr. Newton's *University Education*, p. 9. from Darrel's transcript of the antient statutes, preserved in the Bodleian.

† Wood's *Hist. et Antiq. Univ. lib. ii. p. 339. Hist. and Antiq. of Coll. and Halls*, p. 655. *Statuta Aularia*, sect. v.

make room for under-graduates, who paid tutor's fees, and as dangerous competitors, to prevent them from becoming tutors themselves. This exclusion, or the possibility of this exclusion, of itself prevented any graduate from commencing tutor in opposition to the interest of the foundation members. Independently of this, there were other circumstances which would have frustrated all interference with the fellows' monopoly; but these we need not enumerate.

3. Collegial tuition engrossed by the fellows, a more important step was to raise this collegial tuition from a subsidiary to a principal.* Could the professorial system on which the university rested be abolished, the tutorial system would remain the one organ of academical instruction;—could the University be silently annihilated, the colleges would succeed to its name, its privileges, and its place. This momentous revolution was consummated. We do not affirm that the end was ever clearly proposed, or a line of policy for its attainment ever systematically followed out. But circumstances concurred, and that instinct of self-interest which actuates *bodies* of men with the certainty of a natural law, determined, in the course of generations, a result, such as no sagacity would have anticipated as possible. After the accomplishment, however, a retrospect of its causes shows the event to have been natural, if not necessary.

The subversion of the university is to be traced to that very code of laws on which its constitution was finally established. The academical body is composed of graduates and under-graduates in the four faculties of arts, theology, law, and medicine; and the government of the University was of old exclusively committed to the masters and doctors assembled in Congregation and Convocation: heads of houses and college fellows shared in the academical government only as they were full graduates. The statutes ratified under the chancellorship of Laud, and by which the *legal* constitution of the University is still determined, changed this republican polity into an oligarchical. The legislation and the supreme government were still left with the masters and doctors, and the character of fellow remained always unprivileged by law. But the heads of houses, if not now first raised to the rank of a public body, were now first clothed with an authority such as rendered them henceforward the principal—in fact, the sole administrators of the University weal.† And whereas in foreign Universities, the University

* This third step in the revolution, which from its more important character we consider last, was, however, accomplishing simultaneously with the second, of which it was, in fact, almost a condition.

† Antiently, the right of previous discussion and approval belonged to the House of Congregation. The omnipotent Earl of Leicester, to confirm his hold over the University, and in spite of considerable opposition, constrained the masters to surrender this function to a more limited and manageable body, composed of the vice-chancellor, *doctors*, heads, (for the first time recognised as a public body?) and proctors. (Wood, a. 1569.) Laud, desirous of still farther concentrating the government, and in order to exercise himself a more absolute control, constituted the hebdomadal meeting of his very humble servants the heads; and to frustrate opposition from the House of Convocation to this momentous and unconstitutional change, he forced the innovation on the University by *royal statute*. The Cambridge Caput, first instituted by the Elizabethan statutes, forms a curious pendant to the Oxford hebdomadal meeting; and in general, the history of the two Universities is a history of the same illegal revolution, accomplished by the same influence, under circumstances similar, but not the same.

governed the colleges—in Oxford the colleges were enthroned the governors of the University. The vice-chancellor, (now also necessarily a *college* head,) the heads of houses, and the two proctors, were constituted into a body, and the members constrained to regular attendance on an ordinary weekly meeting. To this body was committed, as their *especial duty*, the care of ‘*inquiring into, and taking counsel for, the observance of the statutes and customs of the University*; and if there be aught touching the good government, the *scholastic improvement*, the honour and usefulness of the University, which a majority of them may think worthy of deliberation, let them have power to deliberate thereupon, to the end that, after this their deliberation, the same may be proposed more advisedly in the Venerable House of Congregation, and then with mature counsel ratified in the Venerable House of Convocation.’ (T. xiii.) Thus, no proposal could be submitted to the houses of Congregation or Convocation, unless it had been *previously discussed and sanctioned by the ‘Hebdomadal Meeting*;’ and through this preliminary negative*, the most absolute control was accorded to the heads of houses over the proceedings of the University. By their permission every statute might be violated, and every custom fall into desuetude; without their permission no measure of reform, or improvement, or discipline, however necessary, could be initiated, or even mentioned.

A body constituted and authorized like the Hebdomadal Meeting could only be rationally expected to discharge its trust, if its members were subjected to a direct and concentrated responsibility, and if their public duties were identical with their private interests. The Hebdomadal Meeting acted under neither of these conditions.

In regard to the first, this body was placed under the review of no superior authority either for what it did or for what it did not perform; and the responsibility to public opinion was distributed among too many to have any influence on their collective acts. ‘Corporations never blush.’

In regard to the second, so far were the interests and duties of the heads from being coincident, that they were diametrically opposed. Their public obligations bound them to maintain and improve the system of University education, of which the *professors* were the organs; but this system their private advantage, both as individuals and as representing the collegial interest, prompted them to deteriorate and undermine.

When the *Corpus Statutorum* was ratified, there existed two opposite influences in the University, either of which might have pretended to the chief magistracy—the *Heads of Houses* and the *Professors*. The establishment of the Hebdomadal Meeting by Laud, gave the former a decisive advantage, which they were not slack in employing against their rivals.

In their individual capacity, the heads, samples of the same brand with the fellows, from whom and by whom they were elected, owed, in general, their elevation to accidental circumstances; and their influence, or rather that of their situation, was confined to the members of their

* And as if this preliminary negative were not enough, there was conceded by the same statutes to the single college head who holds for the time the office of vice-chancellor, an absolute veto upon all proceedings in the houses of congregation and convocation themselves. In Cambridge, a preliminary veto is enjoyed by every member of the Caput.

private communities. The professors, the *élite* of the University, and even not unfrequently called for their celebrity from other schools and countries, were professedly chosen exclusively from merit; and their position enabled them to establish, by ability and zeal, a paramount ascendancy over the whole academical youth.

As men, in general, of merely ordinary acquirements — holding in their collegial capacity only an accidental character in the University — and elevated simply in quality of that character by an act of arbitrary power to an unconstitutional pre-eminence, the heads were, not unnaturally, jealous of the contrast exhibited to themselves by a body like the professors, who, as the principal organs, deserved to constitute in Oxford, what in other Universities they actually did, its representatives and governors. Their only hope was in the weakness of their rivals. It was easily perceived, that in proportion as the professorial system of instruction was improved, the influence of the professorial body would be increased; and the heads were conscious, that if that system were ever organized as it ought to be, it would no longer be possible for them to maintain their own factitious and absurd omnipotence in the academical polity.

Another consideration also co-operated. A temporary decline in the University had occasioned the desertion of the halls; a few houses had succeeded in collecting within their walls the whole academical population; and the heads of these few houses had now obtained a preponderant influence in the University. Power is sweet; and its depositaries were naturally averse from any measure which threatened to diminish their consequence, by multiplying their numbers. The existing colleges and halls could afford accommodation to a very limited complement of students. The exclusive privileges attached in England to an Oxford or Cambridge degree in the professions of law, medicine, and the church, filled the colleges, independently of any merit in the academical teachers. But were the University restored to its antient fame, did students again flock to Oxford as they flocked to Leyden and Padua, the halls must again be called into existence, or the system of domestic superintendence be abandoned or relaxed. The interest of the heads was thus opposed, not only to the celebrity of the professorial body in itself, but in its consequences. The University must not at most transcend the standard of a decent mediocrity. Every thing, in fact, that tended to keep the confluence of students within the existing means of accommodation, found favour with these oligarchs. Subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles even at matriculation, imposed by the puritanical Leicester, was among the few statutes not subsequently violated by the Arminian heads; the numbers of poor scholars formerly supported in all the colleges were gradually discarded*; the expenses incident on a University education kept

* Before the decline of the Halls, academical education cost nothing, and the poor student could select a society and house proportioned to his means, down even to the begging Logicians of Aristotle's Hall. The Colleges could hardly have prevented the restoration of the halls, had they not for a considerable time supplied that accommodation to the indigent scholars to which the country had been accustomed. From the 'Exact Account of the whole Number of Scholars and Students in the University of Oxford, taken anno 1612,' it appears that about 450 *poor scholars and servitors* received gratuitous, or almost gratuitous, education and support in the colleges. How many do so now?

graduated to the convenient pitch ; and residence after the first degree, for this and other reasons, dispensed with.

At the same time, as representatives of the collegial interest, the heads were naturally indisposed to discharge their duty towards the University. In proportion as the public or professorial education was improved, would it be difficult for the private or tutorial to maintain its relative importance as a subsidiary. The collegial tuition must either keep pace with the University prelections, or it must fall into contempt and desuetude. The student accustomed to a high standard in the schools would pay little deference to a low standard in the college. It would now be necessary to admit tutors exclusively from merit ; the fellows, no longer able to vindicate their monopoly, would, in a general competition, sink to their proper level even in their own houses ; while, in the University, the collegial influence in general would be degraded from the arbitrary pre eminence to which accident had raised it.

In these circumstances, it would have been quite as reasonable to expect that the heads of colleges should commit suicide to humour their enemies, as that they should prove the faithful guardians and the zealous promoters of the professorial system. On the contrary, by confiding this duty to that interest, it was in fact decreed, that the professorial system should, by its appointed guardians, be discouraged — corrupted — depressed — and, if not utterly extinguished, reduced to such a state of inefficiency and contempt, as would leave it only useful as a foil to relieve the imperfections of the tutorial. And so it happened. The professorial system, though still imperfect, could, without difficulty, have been carried to unlimited perfection ; but the heads, far from consenting to its melioration, fostered its defects, in order to precipitate its fall.

In Oxford, as originally in all other Universities, salaried teachers or professors were bound to deliver their prelections gratis. But it was always found that, under this arrangement, the professor did as little as possible, and the student undervalued what cost him nothing. Universities in general, therefore, corrected this defect. The interest of the professor was made subservient to his diligence, by sanctioning, or winking at, his acceptance of voluntary gifts or honoraria from his auditors ; which, in most Universities, were at length converted into exigible fees. In Oxford, this simple expedient was not of course permitted by the heads ; and what were the consequences ? The Hebdomadal Meeting had the charge of watching over the due observance of the statutes. By statute, and under penalty, the professors were bound to a regular delivery of their courses ; by statute, and under penalty, the students were bound to a regular attendance in the public classes ; and by statute, but not under penalty, the heads were bound to see that both parties duly performed their several obligations. It is evident, that the heads were here the keystone of the arch. If they relaxed in their censorship, the professors, finding it no longer necessary to lecture regularly, and no longer certain of a regular audience, would, ere long, desist from lecturing at all* ; while the students, finding attendance in their classes no longer compulsory, and no longer

* How well disposed the salaried readers always were to convert their chairs into sinecures may be seen in Wood, aa. 1581, 1582, 1584, 1589, 1590, 1591, 1596, 1608, &c.

sure of a lecture when they did attend, would soon cease to frequent the schools altogether. The heads had only to violate their duties, by neglecting the charge especially intrusted to them, and the downfall of the obnoxious system was inevitable. And this they did.

At the same time other accidental defects in the professorial system, as constituted in Oxford — the continuance of which was guaranteed by the body sworn ‘to the scholastic improvement of the University’ — co operated also to the same result.

Fees not permitted, the salaries which made up the whole emoluments attached to the different chairs were commonly too small to afford an independent, far less an honourable, livelihood. They could therefore only be objects of ambition, as honorary appointments, or supplemental aids. This limited the candidates to those who had otherwise a competent income ; and consequently threw them in general into the hands of the members of the collegial foundations, *i. e.* of a class of men on whose capacity or good intention to render the professorships efficient, there could be no rational dependence.

Some, also, of the public lectureships were temporary ; these were certain to be negligently filled, and negligently taught.

Another circumstance likewise concurred in reducing the standard of professorial competence. The power of election, never perhaps intrusted to the safest hands, was in general even confided to those interested in frustrating its end. The appointment was often directly, and almost always indirectly, determined by college influence. In exclusive possession of the tutorial office, and non-residence *as yet* only permitted to independent graduates, the fellows, in conjunction with the heads, came to constitute the great proportion of the resident members of Convocation and Congregation ; and therefore, except in cases of general interest, the elections belonging to the public bodies were sure to be decided by them.*

Nor was it possible to raise the tutorial system from its state of

* Since writing the above, we notice a curious confirmation in *Terræ-Filius*. This work appeared in 1721, at the very crisis when the collegial interest was accomplishing its victory. The statements it contains were never, we believe, contradicted ; and though the following representation may be in some points exaggerated, the reader can easily recognise its substantial truth. Speaking of the professors : ‘ I have known a profligate debauchee chosen professor of moral philosophy ; and a fellow, who never looked upon the stars soberly in his life, professor of astronomy : we have had history professors, who never read any thing to qualify them for it, but Tom Thumb, Jack the Giant-killer, Don Bellianis of Greece, and such like records : we have had likewise numberless professors of Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic, who scarce understood their mother tongue ; and not long ago, a famous gamester and stock-jobber was elected Margaret Professor of Divinity ; so great, it seems, is the analogy between dusting cushions and shaking of elbows, or between squandering away of estates and saving of souls.’ And in a letter, from an under-graduate of Wadham, — ‘ Now, it is monstrous, that notwithstanding these public lectures are so much neglected, we are all of us, when we take our degrees, charged with and punished for non-appearance at the reading of many of them ; a formal dispensation is read by our respective deans, at the time our grace is proposed, for our non-appearance at these lectures, [N. B.] and it is with difficulty that some grave ones of the congregation are induced to grant it. Strange order ! that each lecturer should have his fifty, his hundred, or two hundred pounds a year for doing nothing ; and that we (the young fry) should be obliged to pay money for not hearing such lectures as were never read nor ever composed.’ (No. X.)

relative subordination, without an absolute subversion of the professorial. The tutor could not extend his discipline over the bachelor in arts, for every bachelor was by law entitled to commence tutor himself. But the colleges could not succeed in vindicating their monopoly even of the inferior branches of education, unless they were able also to incapacitate the University from affording instruction in the superior. For if the public lectures were allowed to continue in the higher faculties, and in the higher department of the lowest, it would be found impossible to justify their suppression in that particular department, which alone the college fellows could pretend to teach. At the same time, if attendance on the professorial courses remained necessary for degrees above bachelor in arts, a multitude of graduates, all competent to the tutorial office, would in consequence continue domiciled in the University, and the fellows' usurpation of that function it would be found impossible to maintain. With the colleges and fellows it was therefore all or nothing. If they were not to continue, as they had been, mere accessories to the University, it behoved to quash the whole public lectures, and to dispense with residence after the elementary degree. This the Heads of Houses easily effected. As the irresponsible guardians of the University statutes, they violated their trust, by allowing the professors to neglect their statutory duty, and empty standing to be taken in lieu of the course of academical study, which it legally implied.

The professorial system was thus, from the principal and necessary, degraded into the subordinate and superfluous; the tutorial elevated, with all its additional imperfections, from the subsidiary into the one exclusive instrument of education. In establishing the ascendancy of the collegial bodies, it mattered not that the extensive cycle of academical instruction was contracted to the narrow capacity of a fellow tutor; — that the University was annihilated, or reduced to half a faculty — of one professorship — which every 'graduated dunce' might confidently undertake. The great interests of the nation, the church, and the professions, were sacrificed to the paltry ends of a few contemptible corporations; and the privileges by law accorded to the *University* of Oxford, as the authorized organ of national education, were by its perfidious governors furtively transferred to the unauthorized absurdities of their *college* discipline.

That the representatives of the collegial bodies, as constituting the Hebdomadal Meeting, were the authors of this radical subversion of the establishment of which they were the protectors, — that the greatest importance was attached by them to its accomplishment, — and, at the same time, that they were fully conscious of sacrificing the interests of the University and public to a private job; — all this is manifested by the fact, that the Heads of Houses, rather than expose the college usurpations to a discussion by the academical and civil legislatures, not only submitted to the disgrace of leaving their smuggled system of education without a legal sanction, but actually tolerated the reproach of thus converting the great seminary of the English Church into a school of perjury, without, as far as we know, an effort either at vindication or amendment. This grievous charge, though frequently advanced both by the friends and enemies of the establishment, we mention with regret; we do not see how it can be rebutted, but shall be truly gratified if it can. Let us inquire.

At matriculation, every member of the University of Oxford solemnly

swears to an observance of the academical statutes, of which he receives a copy of the *Excerpta*, that he may be unable to urge the plea of ignorance for their violation; and at every successive step of graduation, the candidate not only repeats this comprehensive oath, but after hearing read, by the senior Proctor, a statutory recapitulation of the statutes which prescribe the various public courses to be attended, and the various public exercises to be performed, as the conditions necessary for the degree, specially makes oath, ‘that having heard what was thus read, and having, within three days, diligently read or heard read, [the other statutes having reference to the degree he is about to take,] moreover, the seventh section of the sixth title, *that he has performed all that they require, those particulars excepted for which he has received a dispensation.*’ (Stat. T. ii. § 3. T. ix. S. vi. § 1—3.) The words in brackets are omitted in the re-enactment of 1808. (Add. T. ix. § 3.)

Now, in these circumstances, does it not follow that every member of the University commits perjury, who either does not observe the statutory enactments, or does not receive a dispensation for their non-observance?

Under the former alternative, false swearing is manifestly inevitable. Of the University laws, it is much easier to enumerate those which are not violated than those which are; and the ‘*Excerpta Statutorum*,’ which the entrant receives at matriculation, far from enabling him to prove faithful to his oath, serves only to show him the extent of the perjury, which, if he does not fly the University, he must unavoidably incur. Suffice it to say, that almost the only statutes now observed are those which regulate matters wholly accidental to the essential ends of the institution — the civil polity of the corporation, — or circumstances of mere form and ceremonial. The whole statutes, on the contrary, that constitute the being and the well-being of the University, as an establishment of education in general, and, in particular, of education in the three learned professions, — these fundamental statutes are, one and all, absolutely reduced to a dead letter. And why? Because they establish the University on the system of professorial instruction. The fact is too notorious to be contradicted, that while every statute which comports with the private interest of the college corporations is religiously enforced, every statute intended to insure the public utility of the University, but incompatible with their monopoly, is unscrupulously violated.

The latter alternative remains; but does dispensation afford a postern of escape? The statutes bestow this power exclusively on the Houses of Congregation and Convocation, and the limits of ‘*Dispensable*’ and ‘*Indispensable Matter*’ are anxiously and minutely determined. Of itself, the very fact that there was aught indispensable in the system at all might satisfy us, without farther inquiry, that at least the one essential part of its organization, through which the University, by law, accomplishes the purposes of its institution, could not be dispensed with; for this would be nothing else than a dispensation of the University itself. But let us inquire farther:—

The original statute (Corp. St. T. ix. S. iv. § 2), determining the Dispensable Matter competent to the House of Congregation, was re-enacted, with some unimportant omissions, in 1801 and 1808. (Add. pp. 136, 188.) By these statutes, there is allowed to that House the power of dispensation in twenty-three specified cases, of which the fourth — ‘*Pro minus diligenti publicorum Lectorum auditione*’ — need

alone be mentioned, as showing, by the only case in point, how limited is the power committed to Congregation of dispensing with the essential business of the University. The students were unconditionally bound, by oath and statute, to a regular attendance on the different classes; and a dispensation for the cause of ‘a *just impediment*,’ is here allowed to qualify, on equitable grounds, the rigour of the law. It will not be contended, that a power of dispensation allowed for the *not altogether diligent* attendance on the public readers, was meant by the legislature to concede a power of dispensing with all attendance on the professorial courses; nay, of absolutely dispensing with these courses themselves.

There has been no subsequent enactment, modifying the Laudian statutes touching the dispensing power of Convocation. This house, though possessing the right of rescinding old and of ratifying new laws, felt it necessary to restrict its prerogative of lightly suspending their application in particular cases, in order to terminate ‘*the too great license of dispensation, which had heretofore wrought grievous detriment to the University.*’ (Corp. St. T. x. S. ii. § 5.) Accordingly, under the head of *Dispensable Matter*, there is to be found nothing to warrant the supposition, that power is left with Convocation of dispensing with the regular lectures of all or any of its professors, or with attendance on these lectures by all or any of its scholars. On the contrary, it is only permitted, at the utmost, to give dispensation to an ordinary (or public) reader, who had been forced by necessity to deliver his lecture, through a substitute, without the regular authorization. (T. x. S. ii. § 4.) Again, under the head of *Indispensable Matter*, those cases are enumerated in which the indulgence had formerly been abused. All defect of standing (standing at that time meant *length of attendance on the professorial lectures*), all non-performance of exercise, either before or after graduation, are declared henceforward indispensable. But if the less important requisites for a degree, and in which a relaxation had previously been sometimes tolerated, are now rendered imperative; *multo majus* must the conditions of paramount importance, such as delivery of, and attendance on, the public courses, be held as such, — conditions, a dispensation for which having never heretofore been asked, or granted, or conceived possible, a prospective prohibition of such abuse could never, by the legislature, be imagined necessary. At the same time it is declared, that hereafter no alteration is to be attempted of the rules, by which founders, with consent of the University, had determined the duties of the chairs by them endowed; and these rules, as thus modified and confirmed, constitute a great proportion of the statutes by which the system of public lectures is regulated. (T. x. S. ii. § 5.) Under both heads, a general power is indeed left to the chancellor, of allowing the Hebdomadal Meeting to propose a dispensation; but this only ‘*from some necessary and very urgent cause,*’ and ‘*in cases which are not repugnant to academical discipline.*’ We do not happen to know, and cannot at the moment obtain the information, whether there now is, or is not, a form of dispensation passed in convocation for the non-delivery of their lectures by the public readers, and for the non attendance on their lectures by the students. Nor is the fact of the smallest consequence to the question. For either the statutes are violated without a dispensation, or a dispensation is obtained in violation of the statutes.

But as there is nothing in the terms of these statutes, however

casuistically interpreted, to afford a colour for the monstrous supposition, that it was the intention of the legislature to leave to either house the power of arbitrarily suspending the whole mechanism of education established by law, that is, of dispensing with the University itself, whereas their whole tenor is only significant as proving the reverse; let us now look at the ‘*Epinomis, or explanation of the oath taken by all, to observe the statutes of the University, as to what extent it is to be held binding,*’ in which the intention of the legislature, in relation to the matter at issue, is unequivocally declared. This important article, intended to guard against all sophistical misconstruction of the nature and extent of the obligation incurred by this oath, though it has completely failed in preventing its violation, renders all palliation at least impossible.

It is here declared, that all are forsworn who wrest the terms of the statutes to a sense *different from that intended by the legislature*, or take the oath under any mental reservation. Consequently, those are perjured, 1. *who aver they have performed*, or do believe *what they have not performed*, or do not believe: 2. they who, violating a statute, do not submit to the penalty attached to that violation; 3. they who proceed in their degrees without a dispensation for the non-performance of dispensable conditions, *but much more they who thus proceed without actually performing those prerequisites which are indispensable.* ‘As to other delicts,’ (we translate literally,) ‘if there be no contempt, no gross and obstinate negligence of the statutes and their penalties, and if the delinquents have submitted to the penalties sanctioned by the statutes, they are not to be held guilty of violating the religious obligation of their oath. Finally, as the reverence due to their character exempts the MAGISTRATES of the University from the common penalties of other transgressors, *so on them there is incumbent a stronger conscientious obligation*; inasmuch as they are bound not only to the faithful discharge of their own duties, but likewise diligently to take care that all others in like manner perform theirs. Not, however, that it is intended that every failure in their duties should at once involve them in the crime of perjury. *But since the keeping and guardianship of the statutes is intrusted to their fidelity, if (may it never happen!) through their negligence or sloth, they suffer any statutes whatever to fall into desuetude, and silently, as it were, to be abrogated, in that event* WE DECREE THEM GUILTY OF BROKEN FAITH AND OF PERJURY.’ What would these legislators have said, could they have foreseen that these ‘Reverend Magistrates of the University’ should ‘silently abrogate’ every fundamental statute in the code of which they were the appointed guardians?

It must, as we observed, have been powerful motives which could induce the heads of houses originally to incur, or subsequently to tolerate, such opprobrium for themselves and the University; nor can any conceivable motive be assigned for either, except that these representatives of the collegial interest were fully aware that the intrusive system was not one for which a sanction could be hoped from the academical and civil legislatures, while, at the same time, it was too advantageous for themselves not to be quietly perpetuated, even at such a price.

We do not see how the heads could throw off the charge of ‘broken faith and perjury,’ incurred by their ‘silent abrogation’ of the *Uni-*

versity statutes, even allowing them the plea which some moralists have advanced in extenuation of the perjury committed by the non-observance of certain *College* statutes.* For, in the *first* place, this plea supposes that the observance of the violated statute is *manifestly* inconsistent with the end of the institution, towards which it only constituted a mean. Here, however, it cannot be alleged that the statutory or professorial system is manifestly inconsistent with the ends of a University; seeing that all Universities, except the English, employ that instrument exclusively, and as the best; and that Oxford, under her new tutorial dispensation, has never manifestly been the exemplar of academical institutions.

In the *second* place, even admitting the professorial system to be notoriously inconvenient, still the plea supposes that the inconvenience has arisen from a change of circumstances unknown to the lawgiver, and subsequent to the enactment. But in the present case, the only change (from the maturer age of the student) has been to enhance the importance of the professorial method, and to diminish the expediency of the tutorial.

But, in the *third* place, such a plea is, in the present instance, incompetent altogether. This is not the case of a private foundation, where the lawgiver is defunct. Here the institution is public — the lawgiver perpetual; and he might at every moment have been interrogated concerning the repeal or observance of his statutes. That lawgiver is the House of Convocation. The heads in the Hebdomadal Meeting are constituted the special guardians of the academical statutes and their observance; and, as we formerly explained, except through them, no measure can be proposed in Convocation for instituting new laws, or for rendering old laws available. They have a ministerial, but no legislative function. Now the statutory system of public teaching fell into desuetude either in opposition to their wishes and endeavours, or with their concurrence. The former alternative is impossible. Supposing even the means of enforcing the observance of the statutes to have been found incompetent, it was their duty, both to the university and to themselves, to have applied to the legislative body for power sufficient to enable them to discharge their trust, or to be relieved of its responsibility. By law, they are declared morally and religiously responsible for the due observance of the statutes. No body of men would, without inducement, sit down under the brand of ‘violated faith’ and perjury.’ Now this inducement must have been either a public or a private advantage. The former it could not have been. There is no imaginable reason, if the professorial system were found absolutely or comparatively useless, why its abolition or degradation should not have been openly moved in convocation; and why, if the tutorial system were calculated to accomplish all the ends of academical instruction, it should either at first have crept to its ascendancy through perjury and treason, or, after approving its sufficiency, have still only enjoyed its monopoly by precarious toleration, and never demanded its ratification on the ground of public utility. If the new system were

* PALEY, *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*, b. ii. c. 21. His arguments would justify a repeal of such statutes by public authority, — never their violation by private and interested parties, after swearing to their observance.

superior to the old, why hesitate to proclaim that the academical instruments were changed? If Oxford were now singular in perfection, why delusively pretend that her methods were still those of universities in general? It was only necessary that the heads either brought themselves, or allowed to be brought by others, a measure into Convocation to repeal the obsolete and rude, and to legitimate the actual and improved.

But as the heads never consented that this anomalous state of gratuitous perjury and idle imposition should cease, we are driven to the other alternative of supposing, that in the transition from the statutory to the illegal, the change was originally determined, and subsequently maintained, not because the surreptitious system was conducive to the public ends of the University, but because it was expedient for the interest of those private corporations by whom this venerable establishment has been so long administered. The collegial bodies and their heads were not ignorant of its imperfections, and too prudent to hazard their discussion. They were not to be informed that their policy was to enjoy what they had obtained in thankfulness and silence; not to risk the loss of the possession by an attempt to found it upon right. They could not but be conscious, that should they even succeed in obtaining — what was hardly to be expected — a ratification of their usurpations from an academical legislature, educated under their auspices, and strongly biassed by their influence, they need never expect that the state would tolerate that those exclusive privileges conceded to her graduates, when Oxford was a university in which all the faculties were fully and competently taught, should be continued to her graduates, when Oxford no longer afforded the public instruction necessary for a degree in any faculty at all. The very agitation of the subject would have been the signal for a Visitation.

The strictures which a conviction of their truth, and our interest in the honour and utility of this venerable school, have constrained us to make on the conduct of the Hebdomadal Meeting, we mainly apply to the heads of houses of a former generation, and even to them solely in their corporate capacity. Of the late and present members of this body, we are happy to acknowledge, that, during the last twenty-five years, so great an improvement has been effected through their influence, that in some essential points Oxford may, not unworthily, be proposed as a pattern to most other universities. But this improvement, though important, is partial, and can only receive its adequate development by a return to the statutory combination of the professorial and tutorial systems. That this combination is implied in the constitution of a perfect university is even acknowledged by the most intelligent individuals of the collegial interest — by the ablest champions of the tutorial discipline: such an opinion cannot, however, be expected to induce a majority of the collegial bodies voluntarily to surrender the monopoly they have so long enjoyed, and to descend to a subordinate situation, after having occupied a principal. All experience proves, that universities, like other corporations, can only be reformed from without. ‘Voilà,’ says Crevier, speaking of the last attempt at a reform of the University of Paris by itself — ‘voilà à
 ‘quoi aboutirent tant de projets, tant de délibérations: et cette nou-
 ‘velle tentative, aussi infructueuse que les précédentes, rend de plus
 ‘en plus visible la maxime *claire en soi, que les compagnies ne se réfor-*

‘*ment point elles-mêmes, et qu’une entreprise de réforme où n’intervient point une autorité supérieure, est une entreprise manquée.*’ A Committee of Visitation has lately terminated its labours on the Scottish Universities: we should anticipate a more important result from a similar, and far more necessary, inquiry into the corruptions of those of England.

EFFORTS OF THE IRISH CHURCH FOR EDUCATION.

PLAN FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE IRISH POOR.*

FROM the very beginning of our labours up to the present hour, there are two subjects of domestic interest to which we have never ceased to direct the attention of our readers—the question of General Education, and the State of our Fellow-countrymen in Ireland. Conceiving it at this moment to be peculiarly necessary to consider these subjects as they bear upon each other, we propose, in the present article, to take a view of the *Education* of the *Irish* poor.

From the recent parliamentary debates, and the inquiries still pending,—from the extraordinary scenes which have been lately exhibited in Ireland, by the various reverend performers who have appeared on the polemical stage,—and, above all, from the misconceptions which these proceedings have produced in the sister kingdom, we consider that the time is now come when a dispassionate inquiry into the true state of the question may both engage more notice, and produce more beneficial effects, than at any former period. If we can soften existing animosities, by explaining the real state of the argument, and if, by clearing away the rubbish with which the clumsy workmen on both sides have encumbered the ground, we can bring our readers to perceive the exact object of this ecclesiastical contention, we shall be satisfied that a great and decisive advantage has been attained.

* * * * *

The ultimate consequences of the great changes which are now in progress throughout the world have been often made the subject of speculation; and many a quiet observer has lately been tempted to wish he could be permitted to anticipate what aspect society would exhibit some twenty-five or thirty years hence, from the combined operation of General Education—Free Trade—Rail-roads—Gas Lights—Steam-engines—Phrenology—and Joint-stock Companies. It is not quite so interesting, we admit, to look backward: but it has the advantage of being a good deal easier,—and almost as instructive. At all events, our prospective visions will undoubtedly gain a great deal both in clearness and in extent, in proportion to the compass and exactness of our survey of what is past. With regard to Ireland, in particular, the retrospect is of peculiar importance; although, on the present occasion, we do not propose to carry it unreasonably far.

By the census of 1821, the population of Ireland appears to have exceeded 6,800,000; and under the double excitements of the Potato,

* Fourteenth Report of Commissioners of Education, &c. &c.—Vol. xliii. page 197, November 1825.

and the Insurrection Act, it seems to have doubled in thirty-three years. Two hundred thousand young White-boys are thus added annually to society in Ireland. On these calculations, the population of 1825 cannot be less than seven millions and a half! And of this number it may safely be assumed, that 750,000 are within the age of education.* Such, at least, is the proportion which the children receiving instruction in Scotland, Holland, and Switzerland are found to bear to the entire population. By the last Education Report of Ireland, 500,000 children are stated to be in a course of instruction.† *There remains, therefore, upwards of 250,000 children wholly destitute of education.* It must not, however, be imagined, that these 250,000 children are left altogether to nature. If proper schools are not provided for them, that great national instructor — Captain Rock, is at hand! In *his école polytechnique* he receives these pupils; *he* forms them for the high duties to which they may be called; and where we find that 250,000 children are left without education, we cannot feel very greatly surprised that 26,170 persons are committed for trial in a single year.‡

It may, perhaps, be supposed that the 500,000 scholars are pursuing a course of instruction likely to contribute either to individual or national improvement. But this, unfortunately, is far from being the case. Though not inclined to think that any course of education can exist which is not preferable to total ignorance, we believe it to be unquestionably true, that the mere village or hedge-school of Ireland is too frequently of the very worst description; and that, as such, it reduces the benefit of education to its lowest term.

‘It is a fact,’ observes the author of an excellent Address to the Roman Catholic Clergy, ‘that the Irish are taught to read and write wherever the parents can pay a teacher. But when this reading is acquired, it contributes very little towards the advancement of knowledge, there being scarcely any useful books in the hands of the poor. The school-books have hitherto been very few, and ill adapted to their end. A catechism committed to memory in childhood, and but ill understood, and a small prayer-book, seldom read but at mass, form the library of the poor Catholic, unless he pick up from hawkers some wretched trash of ballads and romances, which corrupt instead of improving him. This, generally speaking, being the state of the peasant’s education, it is no wonder that the great body of the people, notwithstanding their knowing how to read, are still ignorant.’§

Mr. O’Driscoll’s statement is equally strong.

‘Every village has its school, and there are few parishes that have not two or more, either permanent or occasional. Reading, writing, and some knowledge of arithmetic are in this way acquired by those who are able to pay a very small stipend to the master. But this kind of education, whatever may be its effect occasionally on individuals, produces no general good result. The people are not improved; their habits and manners continue unaltered. The country schoolmaster is independent of all system and control; he is himself one of the people, imbued with the same prejudices, influenced by the same feelings, and subject to the same habits.’

* Mr. Brougham’s Speech, 1820.

† First Report, 1825.

‡ Sessional Papers, 1824, No. 156.

§ Thoughts on Education of Irish Poor, p. 11.

As the actual condition of the existing schools in Ireland has been made the matter of angry controversy, we shall add the following statement, made by Lord Fingall, Dr. Troy, and four other Roman Catholic Prelates, to Mr. Grant. ‘A vast majority of the poor children of Ireland are Roman Catholics, one half of whom, at least, are unprovided with any kind of useful instruction in their youth; and a great portion of those who are sent to schools profit little thereby, owing to a want of a good system of education, convenient schoolhouses, and competent schoolmasters.’ We have thus established, on the best authority, two propositions; that, at the least, one-third of the children requiring instruction in Ireland are wholly uneducated; and that the education of many of the remaining number is unprofitable, and in some cases mischievous.

It may be imagined, that this lamentable state of things proceeds from the indifference of the peasantry for instruction, or from the want of any pecuniary aid on the part of the Legislature and of the public. But nothing could be more untrue than either of these suppositions: the efforts of the poor to procure instruction are reported ‘to be at once exemplary and affecting. In some instances the poorer parishioners have erected schoolhouses by a voluntary subscription among themselves; and a remarkable fact is stated, that a night-school has been kept to accommodate the children obliged to labour in the day.’* The statute law of the country, on the other hand, prescribes the organization of schools throughout Ireland, and a lavish expenditure of public money has accordingly taken place, — not in performing this national duty, but, as we shall endeavour to show, in increasing all the difficulties of the case, and impeding the progress of rational and liberal education.

To those who may be disposed to slight the moral advantages of education, and to those who doubt whether society is bound to provide instruction for the poor, the economical argument against the present system will, we apprehend, be conclusive. It will be a matter of some surprise to our readers to find, that this *no education* in Ireland has been supported at an expense to the nation of considerably more than one million and a half, voted by Parliament since the Union — a sum sufficient to have laid a foundation for the most liberal and comprehensive scheme of public instruction. The grants to which we allude are the following, all made prior to the late Session.†

Protestant Charter Schools	-	-	-	£ 638,706
Association for Discountenancing Vice	-	-	-	76,882
Foundling Hospital	-	-	-	632,794
Society for the Education of the Poor	-	-	-	93,495
Lord Lieutenant’s School	-	-	-	31,000
				£ 1,482,877

We do not state this invidiously — we do not regret that Parliament should, in its liberality, provide for the education of the poor in Ireland: but we do think, that, in its wisdom, it should pay some attention to the mode in which its votes are carried into execution. We doubt not that the people of Great Britain, upon whom these taxes almost

* Eleventh Education Report, p. 6. Sessional Papers, 1821, No. 743.

† Lords’ Sessional Papers, 1824, No. 47.

exclusively fall, will consider themselves unfairly dealt with, if it is demonstrated that such a lavish expenditure has taken place, without advancing the interests of the peculiar objects of national bounty.

Nor is this all. The Legislature, at a very early period, imposed certain duties on the Established Clergy,—anxious, no doubt, to confide the education of youth to that class which might have been considered most anxious to contribute to the moral improvement of the people. To these duties, and to the mode in which they are performed, we now earnestly entreat the attention of our readers. In the preamble of an Act of the 12th Elizabeth, it is recited, ‘ that the greatest number of the people have lived in a rude and barbarous state, not understanding that Almighty God hath forbidden the heinous offences which they spare not to perpetrate, and whose ignorance in the *high matters touching their damnation* proceedeth only from lack of good bringing up the youth of this realm, either in public or in private schools, where they might be taught to avoid these loathsome and horrible errors.’ The statute proceeds to enact, that there shall be a school established *in every diocese* in Ireland, and that the expenses shall be divided between the *Bishops* and the *Incumbents*; one-third part being defrayed by the bishop, and the remaining two-thirds by the several incumbents. Here we have a declaration by Parliament, that the progress of crime and the ignorance of the people were attributable to the want of schools, and the clergy are required to avert these evils. Let us inquire how far this trust has been fulfilled.

It appears that schools were originally established in several, if not all, the dioceses of Ireland*; and a commission was issued soon after the Restoration, directing the bishops to carry into effect the existing law. Subsequent statutes, passed in the reigns of Geo. I. and Geo. II. (12 Geo. I. 29 Geo. II.) increased the facilities given for the foundation of these schools. One of the acts of the Whig administration of 1806 was to issue a commission to inquire into the state of schools in Ireland; and the report of the commissioners then appointed will be read with surprise, we might almost say with indignation. This report is signed by the late Archbishop of Armagh, and by several eminent characters of the Irish Church.† These high authorities inform us,

‘ That several dioceses are unprovided with proper school-houses, and some are without any; and the general benefit of the whole institution is far from corresponding with the intention of the Legislature, or even the number of schools kept, or *supposed to be so*. Out of the whole number of 34 dioceses, only *ten* are provided with school-houses in tolerable repair. In three others the houses are either insufficient or out of repair, and *the remainder are wholly unprovided for*. In some of the dioceses no diocesan school is kept at all, and in others no effective one. The whole number is only 13, with 380 scholars,’ most of whom pay annual sums of from 25*l.* to 30*l.* for their education. ‘ In the greater part of the dioceses where no school is kept, *there is no contribution* for the payment of a master; but in some instances the salary is paid to a *nominal* master, who either *keeps no school at all*, or one on a different foundation, in which the diocesan is absorbed.’

* Fourth Education Report, Reprinted Sessional Papers, 1813.

† Fourth Report.

Such was the extraordinary, and we cannot avoid adding, the discreditable state in which the Commissioners of Education found these establishments in 1809; and it is almost inconceivable, that for many years subsequent to the publication of the 4th Report, neither the Legislature, the Government of Ireland, nor the Right Reverend personages most deeply concerned, took any efficient steps to supply these deficiencies, and to correct these abuses. This neglect becomes the more surprising, when it is considered that in 1813 a Board of Education was appointed by Parliamentary authority, under whose superintendence these day-schools were placed.* In 1821 it appeared, that the number of diocesan schools had augmented from 13 to 15; in other words, after a public and official exposure of the neglect here detected, there were found *two* bishops, who in the course of *twelve years* made some slight effort to perform their duty! In the Reports of 1821† it appears, that in 15 out of the 34 dioceses in Ireland, contributions were made of the sum of 450*l.*! the *bishops* contributing on an average *five pounds*, and the incumbents 10*l.* to each establishment! In *nineteen* dioceses the obligation of the statute appears to have been *totally disregarded*.

In 1823, one additional school was established, making the total number 16; and the income contributed to all the diocesan schools by the whole of the Irish Church was raised to 500*l.*! being 200*l.* *less than the subscriptions of the city of London Corporations to the single school of Derry!* Such is the condition of these establishments, and such the performance of these duties by the richest and most idle clergy in Europe! *The number of free scholars educated does not exceed nineteen!* We are, however, bound to notice one exception to the preceding observations; we allude to the Bishop of Derry, whose subscription is equal to the contributions of any other ten of his brother prelates.

Another subject of still greater extent and importance must now be considered. So early as in the 28th year of the reign of Henry VIII., an act was passed in Ireland, providing for the establishment of *Parochial* schools for teaching English. In this, as in the former case, the agency of the Church was relied on. The intentions of the Legislature are explained in a quaint and curious preamble, reciting, ‘that
 ‘ nothing doth more conferre to the induction of rude and barbarous
 ‘ people, than a good instruction in God’s holy laws, and a coincidence,
 ‘ conformitie, and familiaritie in language, tongue, manners, order, and
 ‘ apparel, with them that be civil people.’ This statute enacts, that every parent shall cause his children to be instructed in the English tongue, order, and condition. To provide the means for carrying this law into effect, it further directs, that every archbishop and bishop shall, at the time of admitting any person into holy orders, administer an oath that he will keep, ‘or cause to be kept, within the place or
 ‘ paroch where he shall have rule, benefice, or promotion, a schoole
 ‘ for to learne Englische, if any of the children of his paroch come to
 ‘ him to learn the same, taking for the keeping of the said schoole
 ‘ such convenient stipend or salarie as in the said land is accustomedly
 ‘ used to be taken.’ In pursuance of this act, every clergyman *now* inducted into a living takes an oath in the words following:—

‘ I do solemnly swear, that I will teach, or cause to be taught, an

* 53 Geo. III. c. 107.

† Sessional Papers, 1821, No. 553.

‘ English school within the rectory or vicarage of ——— as the law
‘ in that case requires. So help me God.’

It will be found, that, notwithstanding this oath, the statute has not been generally observed, nor have the schools in many cases been kept. A commission having issued in 1788, the following was the result of the inquiry :*

Total number of benefices inspected,	-	-	838
Number of schools kept,	-	-	361
Salary of 2 <i>l.</i> paid to a nominal master,	-	-	74
No schools whatever kept,	-	-	403
		—	838

In 1810, matters had considerably improved; and the Report of the last Commissioners gives us the following statement :†

Total number of benefices in Ireland,	-	-	1125
Schools kept,	-	-	549
No schools,	-	-	187
No return made by clergy,	-	-	389
		—	1125

This report is incomplete; and it is to be regretted that the papers, presented to Parliament from the several bishops, in 1823, are not much more satisfactory. ‡ They exhibit,

Benefices returned,	-	-	910
Parish schools to which incumbents contribute,	-	-	321
Schools in which no report is made of such contribu- tion,	-	-	175
Parish schools to which incumbents <i>do not</i> contribute,	-	-	196
No school,	-	-	135
No return made by clergy,	-	-	83
		—	910

With respect to the nature and extent of the contribution given, a custom is stated to have prevailed of paying 2*l.* annually as a salary to the master; and whenever this small stipend, justly considered by the commissioners to be ‘ utterly inadequate,’§ is given, this is held to be a discharge of the duties imposed on the clergy by the Act of Henry VIII. In pecuniary contributions, this does not appear to have exceeded, in 1822, the sum of 1222*l.*

The returns made in the Session of 1824 are most curious documents. Many more schools are, it is true, returned; but they are returned under peculiar, and rather unaccountable circumstances. In parishes where the existence of parochial schools have been negatived by the papers produced in the former year, flourishing schools are now stated to have existed, to which the incumbents regularly contribute. In some dioceses, credit seems to be taken for the number of parochial schools kept; in others, the necessity and obligation of keeping them is altogether disclaimed. The whole of the papers are as confused and unsatisfactory as if they were intended to impede rather than to satisfy inquiry. Still, even on the face of these returns, the imperfect manner in which the duties of education are discharged by the clergy is manifest, as will appear from the following abstract: ||

* Eleventh Report of Education Commissioners, p. 2, 3. Reprinted, 1813.

† Page 9. ‡ Papers on Schools, Session 1823.

§ Fourteenth Report, p. 4.

|| Papers relating to Schools and Education, Session 1824.

No.	Dioceses.	Number of Benefices.	Parochial Schools.	No Schools.
2	Cashel and Emly - - -	47	20	27
2	Tuam and Ardagh - - -	47	0	47
2	Killaloe and Kilfenora - -	50	26	24
2	Limerick, Ardfert, &c. - -	88	27	61
1	Ossory - - - -	56	28	28
2	Down and Connor - - -	77	51	26
12		365	152	203

Thus, in twelve dioceses, parochial schools are kept in 152 benefices out of 365; and in the remaining 203 cases, notwithstanding the public notice taken of this matter in 1788, in 1809, and during the three last years, *no* parish schools have been established, *by an order of men sworn to maintain them!*

It may possibly be thought, that this extraordinary disregard of a serious obligation arises from the utter inability of the parties concerned to perform their duty; and, to be sure, extreme poverty would go far to *account for* this neglect, though it could not justify it. This excuse, however, will scarcely be pleaded by the Irish Church, poverty not being one of the vows which it has taken. The average incomes of the clergy of the dioceses last named, who have lately obtained help for building glebe-houses from the Board of First Fruits, exceeds 300*l*.* In the diocese of Ossory the average is 445*l*., and in Cloyne above 800*l*. As we may hope that the funds of the Board of First Fruits are not portioned out among the most opulent of the clergy, the general average of clerical income must considerably exceed these sums. But it is plain, that the least of these incomes would be fully adequate to afford the means of keeping a school, according to the spirit and meaning of the statute and of the oath.

Our readers will naturally ask, how the clergy excuse themselves from the charge thus brought and proved against them: And the apologies are most curious. They are tissues of sophisms and inconsistencies. One of the prelates, in a discourse delivered before the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland†, stigmatizes the statute of Henry VIII. as ‘impracticable and oppressive.’ Another suggests that as mention is made in the statute of ‘telling the beads,’ the whole of the enactment may now be disregarded. A third suggestion is, that as the oath administered is not in the precise words of the statute, it cannot be considered as binding. A fourth interpretation, made by one who had himself both taken and administered the oath, is, that the whole may be rejected as obsolete and in desuetude. And a fifth explanation makes a demand from the poor for instruction, a condition precedent to the establishment of any school! We cannot but consider this as miserable special pleading, unworthy of the persons by whom it is used, and the duties to which it refers. Independently of the obligation of the oath, and the force of the law, we very earnestly recommend it to the Irish clergy, as an act of policy and prudence, to bind themselves

* Papers respecting First Fruit Fund, Session 1824.

† Sermon by the Bishop of Clonfert, Dublin, 1807.

as closely as possible to their country by the decent discharge of their moral and civil duties. If the unfortunate religious divisions of Ireland limit their sphere of exertion as ecclesiastics, let them employ their abilities, and prove their usefulness, by improving the condition and promoting the education of their parishioners. The obligation thus conferred will give real security to the Irish Church. It will raise its character and add to its stability more than all the pamphlets and speeches written and delivered during the last century. Let the clergy imitate the conduct of some of its own body; for even in these papers, otherwise so unsatisfactory, evidence is contained of individual exertion, benevolence, and liberality, deserving every commendation.

The real causes of the neglect we have described is a participation in the offence by those who should have controlled the offenders. How could a bishop, himself negligent of the diocesan school, condemn his clergy for not establishing schools in their respective parishes. *Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?*

This question of the contribution of the clergy is one of so much importance, that we trust we shall be excused in tracing it back to its origin. It appears to us to have existed long prior to the Act of Henry VIII. In the more antient days of the church, it is admitted that ecclesiastical property was far from being considered as vested absolutely in the clergy. On the contrary, the fourfold division of tithes is distinctly recognized, and the fourfold appropriation, to the bishop, the parish minister, the repairs of the church, and the purposes of charity and benevolence. The *quarta pars Episcopalis* existed throughout the entire province of Connaught till the government of Lord Stafford. In the diocese of Tuam, a most extraordinary deception, *amounting to positive swindling*, having been practised by the archbishops, the commutation of the *quarta pars* took place in the last century only; and by the Bishop of Clonfert the *quarta pars* is continued to be received to the present day. The history of these proceedings, as detailed by the historian Ware, is most curious: greater subtlety and selfishness were never displayed than by the successful efforts made by the Archbishop to obtain payment twice over for the same property. The fourth part originally intended for works of charity was soon swallowed up by the church itself. In England the poor laws have supplied its place; but in Ireland, no equivalent has been provided. The repairs of churches again have been thrown on the parishes; and the bishoprics being endowed with immense estates, the whole of the tithes fell into the possession of the clergy.

Further, and upon a separate ground, if we consider the early decrees and canons, the duty and the charge of Education will be found to have been imposed on the church. By a decree of the Council of Lateran, it was ordained that a benefice should be provided in every cathedral for the support of a teacher, whose duty should be to instruct 'the clerks and *other poor gratis*.' At a further general council, provision was in like manner made for a lecturer in divinity, when the church was a cathedral, and in other cases a schoolmaster was directed to be provided, empowered to collect a stipend from the rich, but bound to the gratuitous 'instruction of the *clerks and other poor persons*.' The Council of Trent enforced the same principle, (*Sessio v. c. 1. tit. de Institut. Sac. Scrip. et liberalium artium*), and where a sufficient maintenance for teachers in cathedrals could not be procured by the gift of a prebend, still the *Bishop had a power of laying his clergy under contri-*

bution. Even in the poorer parishes a schoolmaster was ordered to be provided, lest ‘that necessary work of piety should be neglected.’ That such arrangements were made in England and Ireland, as well as on the Continent, is well known to those who have looked into ecclesiastical history and law. The schools which still subsist in conjunction with our cathedrals and chapters are evidence of the fact. Swift alludes to a school attached to the chapter of St. Patrick; and we believe that the foundation is still supported.

After Henry VIII. had remodelled the Irish Church, the principles of the existing ecclesiastical law seem to have been embodied in the Acts of Parliament referred to. The cathedral lectureships reappear in the shape of the diocesan classical schools, and the more popular rural establishments are continued in the parish schools.

We have gone into this detail, because upon this point we consider the late Report as most unsatisfactory and inconclusive, and because we trust that we have shown, even to those who maintain, with the greatest strictness, the inviolability of all church property, that the incomes of the Irish clergy are held subject to the duty of educating the people; and that Parliament may enforce a liberal and efficient performance of this duty, without entitling any party to raise the cry of spoliation, so often and so injudiciously applied. Suggestions to this effect have repeatedly been given, and by individuals whom the clergy have no right to consider as their enemies. In the 14th Report of the Commissioners of Education*, it is stated by Archbishops and Bishops, ‘that it would be highly expedient that the contributions of the clergy should be paid with greater regularity, and to a greater extent than usual. *It might not be unreasonable that they should be rated at a sum not exceeding 2½ per cent. of their respective incomes.*’ We perhaps might think it not very unreasonable to carry this contribution considerably further. In 1811, Mr. Wellesley Pole, the chief secretary for Ireland, stated,† ‘that he had no hesitation in saying, that *he would look to the oath of the Protestant clergyman, and see whether they ought not, to a certain degree, to bear the expense of the establishment.*’ From that time to the present, however, no step has been taken to carry these recommendations into effect; and it is singular that these parochial schools, the subject of so much animadversion, were specially exempted from the control of the Board of Education of 1813. It is also worthy of observation, and particularly at the present time, that the commissioners then appointed were some of the ecclesiastical authorities, whose conduct had sanctioned, if it had not produced, the evils complained of.

With respect to the property of the Bishops, we are inclined to think that their incomes might equally bear a regulated contribution for the diocesan schools. During the last session‡, one of their own body averaged their incomes at 5000*l.*; but as that learned and most respectable prelate spoke from conjecture, we may venture to form another estimate.§ In the latest returns made to Parliament, the see of Armagh is stated to be possessed of 51,880 acres of arable and pasture land; that of Derry, of 41,804 acres: Tuam, of 31,375; Cork, of 24,417; Elphin, of 22,776; and Dublin, of 18,058. We are aware of

* Fourteenth Report, p. 3, Appendix C.

† Parliamentary Debates, vol. xx. p. 150.

‡ Speech of the Earl of Limerick on the Tithe Bill.

§ Irish Church Sessional Papers, 1824.

one renewal fine received by a bishop in Ireland of 50,000*l.* for a single lease! a sum equal to the present contribution of the whole Irish Church towards the diocesan schools, — if continued for an entire century! computing the 1125 benefices in Ireland at only 300*l.* each, a sum, we are convinced, very greatly below their actual receipts: and if, on similar principles, an average of 6000*l.* is taken for twenty-two bishoprics, it will be found that the annual revenue of this Church far exceeds, on the lowest estimate, half a million annually. The original *quarta pars* payable by the parochial clergy would, upon these incomes, have exceeded 90,000*l.* But without reverting to so antient a principle, a contribution of ten per cent. would, on the entire sum, produce 50,000*l.* applicable to the purposes of Education.

Nor let this be considered an extravagant or unreasonable proposition. It should be remembered that, since the Union, there has been added to the real estates of the church 171,743*l.*; and to the ecclesiastical personal property 637,296*l.*, — and all this paid out of the taxes of the country.* We are not sure that John Bull is exactly aware of these facts; he never dreams that the tax laid on his porter and ale is partly appropriated to giving additional wealth to a church whose emoluments are better husbanded than its duties are performed. We doubt the popularity of this Holy Alliance between Meux's entire and the Sees of Armagh and Derry; and are inclined to think, that the people of Great Britain would accept a reduction of the assessed taxes, even though Irish deans and chapters were obliged to repair their cathedrals and build their glebe-house at their own expense, as the more antient laws require.† Some high church citizens may perhaps rejoice that they are deprived of light and air, whilst 3000*l.* are employed in building glebe-houses for the rectors of Termonmaquirk or Clonrohid ‡, and may console themselves for the high prices of port wine and tea, by a knowledge that the parish minister of Kilmocomoque is tasting the sweets of Parliamentary bounty. But the age of chivalry is gone; and it may be questioned whether any knight less orthodox than St. George the Bishop of Cappadocia would now break a lance in defence of this extravagant system.

Our readers may, perhaps, now perceive why it is that the existing laws on the subject of Education have not been successful in their operation. We shall proceed to account for the failure of the institutions on which the public money has been lavished.

In point of antiquity, expense, and magnitude of abuse, the Protestant Charter Schools are entitled to our earliest consideration. These establishments originated with Primate Boulter in 1730, who, 'out of his concern for the salvation of the poor creatures,' recommended that the Roman Catholics of Ireland, who were prohibited from forming schools for themselves at home, and who were liable to the penal code if they ventured to a foreign place of instruction, should be kidnapped into the new orthodox establishments. These new schools, therefore, were incorporated for the express purpose of converting the children of Popish parents. As conversion-traps, however, they have wholly failed; and though richly baited, we doubt whether authentic evidence exists that any real wild Papist has ever been caught by them. But still they were the boast and pride of the Ascendancy

* Acts relating to Church Sessional Papers, 1823, No. 135.

† 1 Geo. II. c. 15.

‡ Sec. 5.

party. 'No Popery' is not more essentially connected with the name of King William, than were the Charter Schools with the Protestant interest. In the year 1745, a Committee reported to the Irish House of Commons, 'that the happy effects of these institutions for promoting *the Protestant religion, and the trade and manufactures of the country,* are too obvious to be mentioned.' In 1761, the House of Commons itself resolved, 'that the Protestant religion and national industry are considerably promoted by this excellent charity.' In short, Lords Lieutenants and Secretaries, Chancellors and Bishops, treated the Charter Schools with as much respect and reverence as the same personages now do the declaration against the sacrifice of the Mass and the worship of the Virgin. The schools turned out, however, a profitable job; and so far the purposes of their protectors were answered; 1,612,138*l.* having been expended upon them; 1,027,715*l.* being derived from Parliamentary grants.* The apprenticeship of 7905 children having cost *one million Sterling.*

It is quite true, as has been said by a writer on this subject, that 'what was done by the Government in the way of education, was more from political motives than from any wish for the moral improvement of the people.†' In these, as in all other institutions where the principle on which they are founded is vicious, the whole degenerated into abuse. Favourable reports of these schools were annually presented; but in 1788, John Howard, having visited Ireland, was examined before the House of Commons, and exposed such a scene of atrocious misconduct, cruelty, and neglect, as, in his own words, to 'disgrace Protestantism, and encourage Popery.' The 'children are stated, in many cases, to be half starved, and almost naked; forced to work for the benefit of the masters. The instructors barbarous in their discipline; and the houses in decay.‡' Yet, with such evidence on the table of Parliament, the grants have been annually continued, both before and since the Union.

Attempts were made at various times, by the Opposition, to reduce this expenditure; but it is evident that even those who took a part in the discussion were not aware of the extent of abuse which prevailed. It has only been within the present year that the evil state and condition of these bulwarks of the ascendancy party, and true specimens of the exclusive system, have been fully exposed. The Parliamentary Commissioners which have lately reported on the subject of Irish Education very justly state —

'By the manner in which the children are separated from their parents and kindred, *all those ties are effectually broken on which the wisdom of Providence has rested the first principles of human society.* The poor inhabitants of Ireland were rendered so unwilling to part with their children, by the dread of losing them for ever, that it became at one time necessary to establish nurseries in order to rear up children to fill the schools.

'It appears to have so frequently happened that the girls who had passed through the schools, and been placed out as apprentices, either left their places, or when their time was expired were turned out, without protection, on the world, that it was thought advisable by the Society, about two years ago, to open a house in Charlemont-

* First Report on Education, 1825, p. 30.

† Stephens on Charter Schools, p. 3.

‡ Howard on Prisons.

‘ place, for the temporary reception of such girls, till they could obtain other situations. Many cases have occurred in which such an asylum has no doubt been of the greatest service. Young persons have been completely educated from time to time; but for want of adequate stations, apprenticeships, or employment, have been found, on their removal from the school, wandering about as *broken-hearted beggars*.’

The cruelties exercised in these schools afford an illustration of the tender mercies of the exclusive system. The Charter Schools, founded out of Primate Boulter’s concern for the salvation of the poor Papists, seem to rely exclusively upon the arm of the flesh for their success in spiritual contest. The following examples will satisfy the most sceptical mind:—

‘ SLIGO SCHOOL.—The master was a man of violent and ungoverned passions, and the boys were most severely and cruelly punished, not only by him, but also by his son, and by a foreman in the weaving department; and these punishments were inflicted for very slight faults. The habitual practice of the master was to seize the boys by the throat, and press them almost to suffocation, and to strike them with a whip or his fist upon the head and face during the time his passion lasted. The anger of the master was chiefly excited by the boys performing less work than he expected *in the weaving shop*, (of which the master had the profit), or by their not weaving well.’

‘ STRADBALLY SCHOOL.—From the evidence taken on this occasion, it was sufficiently proved, that about three weeks before the first visit, one boy had been flogged with a leathern strap nine times in one day, his clothes being taken down each time, and that he received in the whole near 100 lashes, all for ‘ a sum in long division.’ On the same day, another boy appears to have received 67 lashes, on account of another sum in arithmetic; another boy, only thirteen years old, had received seventeen stripes with a rope. On the 8th October, the day before the second visit, eight boys had been so severely punished that their persons were found by one of the Commissioners in a shocking state of laceration and contusion.’

‘ CASTLE-DERMOT SCHOOL.—The boys complained of being ill-fed and cruelly beaten, both by the master and mistress.—Two boys had recently been very severely punished by the master. They stated that they had been set to work in the garden, and having had but little breakfast, they were hungry, and had eaten a raw cabbage!’

‘ CLONMEL SCHOOL.—At Clonmel, in 1817, the boys appear to have been punished with great severity, by the usher, who used on all occasions a common horsewhip. It is stated, that he often gave *four dozen lashes with his utmost strength*, and that the boys have been beaten till *the blood ran down upon the flags*. A boy was once knocked down by the usher, and *kicked so severely, that two of his ribs were broken*; and the ear of another boy was nearly pulled off.’

These are not, however, the only blessings of the Charter schools—the cruelty of the system is fully equalled by its corruption. Presents and bribes pass between the officers and those whom it is their duty to control; and every check provided by the constitution of the society becomes only a new source of illegitimate profit.

‘ The speedy intimation transmitted to the Masters of complaints preferred against them, may probably be accounted for by the habitual good understanding which appears to subsist between them and

‘ the Officers of the Society. It is not denied that presents of greater
 ‘ or less value have been given by the Masters of different Schools to
 ‘ all the officers ; and the Registrar is at present considerably indebted
 ‘ to the Masters of six or seven schools, for money borrowed from
 ‘ them, for which we do not collect that he was to pay interest.’

Our readers will naturally ask, under whose control and management these schools are placed ? We answer, with shame and regret, that Archbishops and Bishops, dignitaries of the Church, are those under whose auspices this system has continued. A committee of management, formed chiefly of these individuals, meet in Dublin ; and a minister of the Establishment superintends every school as Catechist, and receives a salary for so doing. The mode in which the duties of the latter offices are performed will appear from the following examination of the Secretary of the Society.

Q. Of 270 Monthly Reports which ought to have been made, how many have been made ? *

A. A very small portion ; I cannot tell how many.

Q. Do you believe as many as *ten* have been received ?

A. Upon my word, I doubt it.

Q. Can you recollect any *one* instance ?

A. I do not think there is.

Nor are the Bishops and Archbishops in Dublin more vigilant than the reverend Catechists in the country. On the contrary, they receive and sanction accounts which, year after year, among other frauds and absurdities, return the same individuals, as being younger, or of the same age, as in the year preceding !

We should not have dwelt so long on this degrading subject, but that we consider it important, as involving a general principle. These Charter schools, we repeat it, are fair, and perhaps favourable specimens of the present system of governing Ireland. The principle of exclusion laid down by injustice leads to cruelty, oppression, and corruption. This system, on which the House of Commons have recorded their opinion by the only vote passed *nemine contradicente* during the present Session, is the very system which the votes of the House of Lords, and the doctrines of Lord Eldon, tend to perpetuate. To England, it is disgrace — and not only disgrace, but most expensive disgrace. To Ireland, it is pain and grief. To the empire, it is danger, and that of the most serious description.

The Association is, in fact, the Irish Church under another name ; it consists of Archbishops, Bishops, and all the subordinate classes of the clergy. These reverend and right reverend persons, who, as we have seen, do not manifest any extraordinary zeal for education in their individual capacities, no sooner take the field as the Incorporated Association, than they become all life and vigour. The change in the Chinese sensitive leaf is not greater when placed on the warmest palm. It is right to notice the fact, that the schools neglected are those the clergy are bound themselves to maintain, whilst their efforts as an Association are encouraged by annual grants from Parliament. These votes have amounted to 76,000*l.*, and provided for the support of 186 schools.† An annual sum of 2000*l.* is expended for the extraordinary

* First Report on Education, p. 25.

† Irish Education, 1823, No. 141, p. 3.

purpose of ‘*Catechetical Premiums*.’ But if the church of Ireland is not able to give instruction to its younger members without the help of pecuniary rewards, we really think it not at all uncharitable to surmise, that there must exist some lamentable deficiency either in the zeal or the abilities of its ministers. What would be thought of an application from the vicars and churchwardens of the parish of St. James’s, Clerkenwell, or from the ecclesiastical authorities in the back settlements of St. Leonard’s, Shoreditch, or Whitechapel, praying the Chancellor of the Exchequer to furnish them with money to buy small presents, in order to encourage the little boys and girls to learn the Catechism? If such a proposition would in England be treated with the ridicule it deserves, why should it be tolerated in any other part of the empire? Are the purses of the Irish clergy so light, their duties so burthensome, or their mental resources so limited, that Rectors and Curates, Godfathers and Godmothers, must be assisted at the public expense? Cannot the young Protestants of Cunnemara and Erris, as well as those of St. Botolph’s, Aldgate, learn to repeat the Creed and the Ten Commandments, without earning half a crown by this orthodox effort? The only parallel case that can be alluded to, is the course of moral instruction pursued in the hulks, where the chaplains appointed by the home department complete the education of the interesting inhabitants of the *Justicia* and *Retribution*, by teaching them ‘to repeat the thirty-nine articles and the homilies by heart.’*

Though the schools of the Association have done some good, they are established on principles which cannot fail of exciting the suspicion and jealousy of the Roman Catholics. The master must be a Protestant, and the schools must be placed under the control and direction of the Protestant clergymen. ‘The Association,’ observes one of its most zealous advocates†, ‘is integrally united with the Establishment. By the spirit of the Established Church it is actuated throughout the whole of its system; on her principles it sets all her agency at work. Its patrons are her Archbishops and Bishops; her clergy are the instruments by which it chiefly accomplishes its objects, and their ministry is the principal channel through which all the benefits the public derive from it flow.’ It is obvious, therefore, that this can never be a mode of instruction for any but the members of the Established Church.

The only two other classes of schools supported by the public are of a different and of a better character than those already alluded to. Those under the direction of the Society for the Education of the Poor are stated to receive children of all religious persuasions. By the rules, no sectarian distinctions are allowed to influence the selection of masters; and all catechisms are excluded. But this society will not make any grants to schools in which the ‘Scriptures, without note and comment,’ are not read by all the scholars in the higher classes. Though this last regulation has created much jealousy and distrust, and though the society has (we believe inadvertently) given assistance to establishments in which catechisms are introduced, and distinctions made in the choice of masters, still there is here plainly an approach towards a rational system of education. If Scripture reading were only made

* See Annual Report on Convicts, Sessional Papers, p. 9.

† Letter to Right Honourable C. Grant, by Anglo-Hibernus.

permissive instead of obligatory, these schools would be nearly perfect; and, we are convinced, there would be more Scripture readers than at present. The Society states, that the Parliamentary grants it has received were made ‘on the condition that the Scriptures should be read.’ No such condition, however, appears in the Report recommending the original grant; and the Society has always been characterized by its friends, as affording equal advantages to all, whether Protestant or Catholic. This, in candour and fairness, it cannot be said to do. So far as relates to training masters for country schools, and publishing cheap and useful books, very considerable good has been effected; and in these respects the Society deserves the gratitude and support of all classes.

The funds for education administered by the Lord Lieutenant *profess* to be appropriated without any restriction of a religious nature. Even the condition of Scripture reading is not enforced; and aid is granted to any school, for the establishment of which a private subscription has been made. Yet even here the evil spirit of religious distinction has shown itself. For this the Commissioners are not exclusively responsible; but it is attributable to the interference of the Church, which has claimed a permanent right of nominating masters even for these schools.

From this review, it appears that there is not one of the many establishments for education in Ireland of which the Roman Catholics have not a right to entertain some jealousy and distrust: these feelings varying in proportion as the principle of religious difference, and the fear of proselytism, prevails.

It may be expedient to bring the contending parties to a test, which will ascertain at once their zeal and their sincerity. If, as some suggest, the Roman Catholics entertain hostility to all education, a principle so vicious cannot be too severely stigmatized, or too strongly opposed. If this be really latent in the opposition which they have given to various modifications of instruction, their conduct cannot but be considered as unfair and insidious. Let us inquire, therefore, into the actual proceedings of the Roman Catholics, with reference to this question.

For a considerable part of the last century, the Popish schoolmaster and his school were persecuted and proscribed by law. Penal enactments were multiplied against instruction; and the Alphabet and Multiplication Table were considered to be dangerous to the State. Even in the late reign, we find complaints made to Parliament, not that the Roman Catholics opposed the progress of education, but, on the contrary, ‘that a great number of schools were dispersed in different parts of the kingdom under the tuition of Popish masters, contrary to the sense of several acts of Parliament.’* At that time it appears that the Catholics were very generally employed in teaching their children to read, even at the hazard of pains and penalties.† In our own times, repeated efforts have been made by the Roman Catholics to form societies for education; but whilst almost every other association for instruction has shared in the liberality of Parliament, in this case alone has all encouragement been pertinaciously refused. Yet it appears

* Commons’ Journals, 1769.

† Stephen on Charter Schools, p. 21.

from a table recently published*, and uncontradicted, that in the single Archdiocese of Tuam, the titular prelate and his clergy maintain 166 schools, containing 13,064 scholars; being a greater number of schools and scholars than can be found in the hands of those societies to whom tens and hundreds of thousands have been granted by the Legislature.

It may be asked, whence then arises the controversy? If the Catholics are really anxious for education, will they not also admit, that education is incomplete if founded on an exclusion of all religious principle? To this the Catholics give an unqualified assent. 'It is 'most respectfully submitted to his Majesty's government,' observed Lord Fingall and the five Bishops in 1819, 'that the want of an early 'religious education is one of the causes why the peasantry are so 'easily induced to take unlawful oaths, and to commit those acts 'which have disgraced this country, disturbed its peace, and impeded 'its prosperity.'—'The only education which is not an evil in itself†,' Dr. Doyle too broadly states, 'appears to me to be that which regards 'both the mind and heart, by uniting the literary with the *religious* 'improvement of the people. To give a child a literary education, 'and send him forth when grown up to learn the principles of his 'religion amidst the bustle of the world and the tumult of his 'passions, would be only to increase his capacity for evil, without sub- 'jecting him to any effectual restraint, or furnishing him with any 'sufficient instruments to good.'—'To the task of Irish improve- 'ment,' observes Mr. O'Driscoll‡, 'you must bring the powerful 'engine of *religion*, and by a long, laborious, and persevering process, 'aided by the education of letters, you will effect much.' The excellent pamphlet of the Roman Catholic clergyman§, already quoted, carries this principle still further; and after having enumerated the many vices and errors prevalent among the various classes, states, 'Such are the effects of education, without the accompaniment of 'religious instruction.'

Nor is the conduct of the Roman Catholics inconsistent with these declarations. Religious associations, or Confraternities ||, as they are called, are found in many parishes; the members of which are under obligation to 'assist in instructing the ignorant; teaching the Cate- 'chism; reading books of piety for the improvement of others; pre- 'paring children for their first communion; and visiting the sick.' These recommendations have been acted upon; and some of the best and most extensive schools in Ireland are exclusively under the direction of Catholic Religious Societies. We can refer particularly to the schools established by a benevolent Catholic at Waterford and its vicinity, to the Monk's school at Cork, and the school of St. Clare at Limerick.

From a conviction that the mere establishment of schools would leave the task of education incomplete, efforts have also been made by the Roman Catholic clergy to supply useful books, and to establish

* Practical Views on the Condition of Ireland, by Eneas Macdonnell, p. 16.

† Pastoral Instructions, 1821, p. 61. *App.*

‡ Thoughts on the Education of Irish Poor, p. 15.

§ Proposal for Advancement of Religious Knowledge.

|| Dr. Doyle on Confraternities, p. 53.

circulating libraries. These establishments are the more valuable, because they are supported by the people themselves; and their good effects may be estimated from the following statement.

‘ I know a parish where, but a few years back, the people were ignorant and vicious to a degree exceeding belief. The pastor, finding it impossible to afford sufficient opportunities of oral instruction, resolved to try whether religious reading might not prove a useful substitute. Accordingly, a stock of books was procured, placed in the chapels, and given to the people in the manner of the circulating libraries. From such as were able to afford it, five-pence in the month were required as means of paying for the books, and of adding to them occasionally. In this manner has the system proceeded for upwards of seven years; during which time it has cost the pastor very little trouble; few books have been damaged, and only two or three lost. Such was the people’s indifference, or rather aversion, to spiritual reading when first proposed, that it was difficult in most cases to bring them to it. But in a short time, the practice began to create a relish for itself; new light sprung from it, and showed the people their alarming deficiencies. Through the means of these books the character of the people is so much improved, they are become so orderly, sober, and in many instances so religious, that those who knew them previous to the period in question wonder at their change.’ *

After considering these facts, we trust our readers will admit, that, both in theory and practice, the Roman Catholics are friendly to education, and in particular to that education which is founded on religious instruction.

But though such are their opinions, they vehemently oppose any system connected directly or indirectly with Proselytism; and under this name it is no doubt true, that they object to schools in which all children who have reached a certain proficiency in reading are *compelled* to read the Scriptures. On this principle Catholics and Protestants are at issue; it is the question which has excited the most furious animosities, and has impeded incalculably the progress of education in Ireland.†

Which of the two parties has reason and justice at its side?

‘ We venture to express our unanimous opinion ‡,’ declare four prelates of the Established Church, ‘ that no system of education can be carried into effectual execution in Ireland, unless it be explicitly avowed and clearly understood, as its leading principle, that no attempt shall be made to influence or disturb the peculiar tenets of any sect or description of Christians.’ To this we fully and cordially assent; nor can we sufficiently praise the wisdom and liberality of the principle thus stated by the Commissioners. The simple question to be discussed therefore is, whether an enforced reading of the Scriptures by Roman Catholic children, received in schools maintained at the public expense, does, or does not, contravene the doctrine thus laid down in the 14th Report?

* Proposal for Advancement of Religious Knowledge, p. 25.

† Fourteenth Report on Education, p. 2.

‡ Sessional Papers, 1813.

In questions of religious faith, no one sect has the right, or possesses the means, of judging for another. An act, however reasonable or meritorious in one class of persons, may be considered blameable by another. With the great majority of mankind, wearing a hat is thought a matter with which the conscience has little concern, and offering evidence on oath to forward the ends of justice seems an act which it would be irrational to condemn. Yet the broad brim of the Quaker resisted the whole efforts of the State; and the small community of the *Unitas fratrum*, or Moravians, have been respected by the Legislature. Both sects have been allowed to decide for themselves; and we neither inflict penalties nor withhold benefits on account of their conscientious scruples.* The Protestants, bred up as they are ‘in a set of principles and notions differing from ours on the mode of communicating religious knowledge, cannot fairly judge us by their own criterion; and, therefore, as benevolent men and as Christians, they ought to be more indulgent to our feelings in what regards the religious education of our people, and more cautious of charging us with hostility to education, and to the moral improvement of the poor, merely for endeavouring to preserve them in the religion for which their fathers suffered.’ Such is the calm and rational appeal made by the author to whom we have so often referred,—a Catholic priest himself, and fully competent to speak the opinions of the body to which he belongs. It is not because, as Protestants, we believe that Scripture reading in schools is meritorious and useful, that we have any right to call on the Catholics to assent to such a proposition. Perhaps the broadest line of distinction between the two sects, and that which to us constitutes a principal superiority of the reformed churches, is the assertion of the right of private judgment in matters of faith by all of the Protestant communion. But this, which we pertinaciously assert, the Roman Catholics pertinaciously deny. This has been, from the earliest times, as much an article of their religion as transubstantiation or the seven sacraments; and as a corollary from this denial of the right of private judgment, necessarily follows the refusal to place the Scriptures in the hands, either of the young or of adults, without the commentary of the Roman Church upon the sacred text. Should we act wisely in refusing to educate the Irish peasantry, unless they read books in which the invocation of the Virgin and the intercession of the saints were attacked? The question of an enforced Scripture instruction is the same in principle, and only differs in degree. We declare our willingness to educate the Catholics; we protest against allowing any religious distinctions to influence us; and yet we affix to our interposition the very reasonable and moderate condition, of abjuring one of the peculiar doctrines of their Church. ‘Why do not priests allow the Bible, that excellent and sacred volume, to be read in schools?’—We might as well inquire, ‘Why they forbid their flocks to come to church,—that excellent and sacred place; or to profess Protestantism, that excellent and sacred religion?’†

But the Roman Catholics have more to complain of than an obligatory Scripture instruction, though even that we have seen to be at

* Proposal for Advancement of Religious Knowledge, p. 42.

† Letter to Right Honourable C. Grant, on Bishop Mant’s Charge, p. 32.

variance with the principles of the 14th Report. Frank avowals of the intention of making proselytes have taken place; and exhortations have been delivered to encourage the faithful in the performance of this duty. In this some members of the Church, and the more zealous dissenters, have concurred; who, whilst they declare controversial war, are horror-struck that the Catholics, in their turn, should invoke the fathers, and prepare for battle. A prelate, who informs us that ‘His Majesty had been graciously pleased, by the recommendation of his confidential advisers, to intrust him with the charge of an extensive diocese*,’ calls the attention of his clergy ‘to the corrupt system of faith and practice by which the people committed to his care are beset and entangled.’† He then proceeds to inform them that they are sworn, ‘at their ordination, to effect the removal of the errors of the Romish Church from the minds of their parishioners, *with a view to the substitution of the reformed code of Christian truth*, which is professed by the United Church of England and Ireland.’‡ The bishop then states§, that ‘Education ought to be considered by us, not as the instrument of political, civil, or even moral improvement, but of religious improvement ||; — not religion according to any indeterminate notion of it, but the religion of Christ, not only as the Lord hath commanded, but *as our Church* hath received the same. This we are to bind upon their belief, and interweave into their practice.’ After this declaration, it was not surprising that the Hegira of this prelate, from Killaloe to Bath, was rapid and unexpected.

The conduct of some of the zealous Dissenters has been even more objectionable than this frank indiscretion on the part of the Church. Their wisdom has, in many instances, been that of the serpent; and, whilst protesting against proselytism, they have endeavoured in every way to undermine and attack the faith of the peasantry. Tracts of the most insulting tendency have been printed and circulated. When ‘The Prophecies relating to Antichrist,’ — ‘Latin Prayers not fit for Irishmen,’ — ‘Close conformity between the Jews and Roman Catholics,’ are distributed at the same time, and by the same hands, with the Bible, is it surprising that the latter should be viewed with some degree of suspicion? Were these efforts at conversion made through any other agency than that of education, they would not be so objectionable; and, if they were made fairly and above board, they would not be so deserving of moral censure. But every school into which this evil spirit enters creates around it a circle of suspicion and alarm, and limits the exertions of those who ought to be successful, because they are honest and sincere. May we not ask these friends to proselytism, avowed or concealed, whether they would tolerate from the Catholics the conduct they themselves pursue? What would they think if Dr. Doyle and Mr. O’Connell were to make an apostolic tour throughout England, lecturing publicly at every market town against the error of heresy, and recommending the consolatory doctrines of indulgences and absolution. The conversion of a single Protestant, even that of a bar-maid at Shrewsbury, or a waiter at Barnet, would shake all Bartlett’s buildings to their centre.

* Charge by the Rev. Dr. Mant, p. 1.

‡ Page 26.

§ Page 27.

† Page 25.

|| Page 41.

Our readers must not imagine, however, that we consider the Roman Catholics, though excusable, altogether blameless. They have sometimes taken alarm when danger was not impending, and have refused the services of friends, who had no second or hidden object in view. Such is the natural consequence of any system like that which prevails in Ireland, mischievous no less by the evil it produces, than by the good which it prevents. Whilst we admit the great sacrifices made out of their poverty by the Catholic clergy, whilst we are grateful for the services they have rendered, we cannot consider them a proper body to be unreservedly intrusted with the duties of education. These duties we consider as both civil and political; and in their discharge the clergy of neither sect should be allowed any dominion. An unrestrained power may be conceded to them in religious instruction, and it is their duty to prevent any improper interference in matters of faith; but this is all they should seek or obtain. They may be useful instruments; they would be dangerous masters.

On what plan then ought the education of the poor to be placed in Ireland? Our answer is a simple one — on such a foundation as will ensure to all sects equal advantages, and will extend to every peasant the means of instruction. One common system for all, whether Protestant or Catholic, we consider to be infinitely preferable to separate and exclusive schools. But if separate schools are to be maintained for Protestants, a measure which we deprecate, it is the grossest injustice to leave the establishment exclusively Catholic, without similar assistance. With respect to the course of reading to be adopted in liberal schools, those who have considered many of the elementary books of Catholic religious education are aware that the greater part of them deserve the approbation even of Protestant instructors. We would refer to Chalmers's *Morality of the Bible*, the *Evangelical History of Christ*, Reeve's *History of the Bible*, and many others. In some of the periodical circulating libraries we have described, the following books are admitted: — Dr. Hornihold's *Explanation of the Commandments* — Bossuet's *Exposition of Christian Doctrine* — *Gother's Exposition of the Epistles and Gospels* — *Imitation of Christ* — Chaloner's *Meditations*. On these books the religious education of Catholics might very safely be founded. We are also convinced that certain extracts might be made from the Scriptures themselves, which would give no offence to pious Roman Catholics. In the schools of mutual instruction, both in France and Italy, works of this description have been introduced and approved of by the clergy. We particularly call the attention of the Irish Catholics to the *Sacred History of Autonelli*, published at Florence in 1819. (*Compendio d'Istoria Sacra, ad uso della scuola d'insegnamento reciproco a Firenze.*) The tablets used in the French schools are also worthy of attention. 'Les tableaux de lecture choisie, tous des sujets religieux et revêtus de l'autorité ecclésiastique, font de chacun des exercices une sorte d'instruction pour le cœur, en développant les sentimens les plus favorables à la pratique de la vertu.' (*Rapport de la Société pour l'Instruction élémentaire*, 1823, p. 31.) The study of such extracts seems to have been all that was contemplated by the Commissioners of Education, when they speak of 'a selection from Sacred History, which shall not be liable to any of the objections made to the use of the Scriptures in the course of education.'* This, too, is

* Fourteenth Report. Education.

all that is suggested by Mr. Leslie Foster, when he recommends ‘such extracts from the New Testament* as no candid Roman Catholic can imagine to have any bearing on points in dispute.’

That this proposition would not be rejected by the Roman Catholics, we infer from the reasonableness of the case, and the document presented to Mr. Grant by Lord Fingall and the five Bishops, and also from Dr. Doyle’s directions given in a printed letter to one of his clergy. ‘To meet the wishes of others, a lesson or lessons of the Douay Bible may be read for the Roman Catholic children each day, by the master who teaches them their catechism.’† Such a volume of extracts, and other elementary books, having been approved of by some of the most authoritative persons on both sides, we would willingly give to the parish clergy of *either* persuasion an absolute *veto* on the introduction of new books into the primary schools. These gentlemen should have a constant power of superintendence, and certain hours should be allotted to them for the peculiar religious instruction of the children of their respective communions. If Parliamentary grants are necessary, they should be appropriated exclusively in building school-houses, training masters and mistresses, and providing useful and cheap books. The school itself should be maintained by the contributions of the clergy, and, where those were inadequate, by parish assessment, this charge being thrown upon the landlords’ rent, and not upon the occupying tenant. Subscribers to a certain amount, and the parishioners in a special vestry, should be allowed the nomination of the master; but no appointment should take place, except of a person bringing a certificate of qualification from a central school maintained in Dublin. A garden, and wherever it is practicable some acres of land, should be attached to each school; and agricultural instruction, with an elementary knowledge of mechanics and chemistry, should form part of the course of study. Every school should be a school of industry.

Though we are convinced that such a proposition as this would be received with gratitude in Ireland, and would be most useful, we are not such enthusiasts as to imagine that it would remedy all the evil consequences of injustice and oppression. ‘An improved course of Education,’ observed Mr. Plunket, ‘ought to grow out of an improved system of Government. We are otherwise only teaching a wretched peasantry to calculate wealth he can never possess, and to read of happiness he is not destined to enjoy.’ A writer who, though he conceals his name, is well known as a friend and correspondent of Burke, observes, ‘Learning is not only considered by some instructors to be better than house and land, but to be preferable to meat, clothing, and all such coarse enjoyments. If a child’s mind is fed, it seems this is all the nourishment he requires. The energies of his spirit are to support the weakness of his flesh, and science is to check the progress of starvation! Then as to clothing, provided his intellect is well lined, no matter how thinly his body is covered,—*Murtagh Shaughnessy’s children are very naked!* Poor things, they ought to be sent to school — *They have nothing to eat!* — They should be taught to read without a moment’s loss of time!—By writing,

* Appendix to Fourteenth Report.

† Pastoral Instruction, p. 63.

‘ reading, and arithmetic, all the evils of life are to be cured, and all its wants supplied.’*

But this is too miserable for mockery. Education is not a nostrum that is to cure every possible disease. We know that equal laws fairly administered, personal freedom, and more extended employment, are the first wants of Ireland. But it is no less true that even these remedies, did we possess a government sufficiently strong and virtuous to try them, would be incomplete without a wise, a comprehensive, and truly liberal system of Education.†

* Letter to the Right Hon. C. Grant, by *Atharnie*.

† See another article, in which the State of Education in Ireland is discussed, vol. xxxvii. page 60.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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